

The Education Question

Forty-Four Years of The Education Question

1870—1914

THE STORY OF THE PEOPLE'S SCHOOLS
SIMPLIFIED AND EXPLAINED

BY

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PREFACE.

THIS work originated in a series of articles on "Aspects of the Education Question" written in the beginning of 1912, giving an account of the rise and progress of the controversy begun in 1870, but of which we have not yet seen the end.

It is intended to describe in popular language, free from technicalities and with substantial accuracy, all that has been done in moulding our educational system up to the present time.

The evidence and authorities quoted consist of Parliamentary debates and reports on the various Acts or Bill, reports and quotations from newspapers, magazines, etc.

Facts and figures are given, as a rule, from Parliamentary returns or standard works of reference, and the aim has been to give a fair and impartial account of the present educational position.

More attention has been paid to the practical effects of the working of the Acts than to the verbal provisions, which often conceal rather than explain what is done, and many of the most important results are not apparent until the Bill has become an Act and it is too late to remedy abuses and injustices which were not foreseen when it was in the making.

It was intended to recast the articles and put them before the public in a more systematic form by rearranging the matter so as to avoid the repetition inseparable from a series of newspaper articles not

necessarily continuous, though dealing with the same question under different aspects.

Upon further consideration, and because the subject is so vast and complex and so little understood, it was decided that this very repetition would enable the layman to get a better grip of the facts and better understand their bearing on the different phases of such an important question.

SIR W. HARCOURT ON RELIGIOUS
EQUALITY AND THE RIGHTS OF
MINORITIES.

“ If there is any principle to which the party on this side of the House is pledged more than another, and which is the corner-stone of the Liberal majority, it is the principle of religious equality, which was decided upon the hustings in 1868.

“ Now, what is that doctrine of religious equality? If I understand the doctrine it is this : that the State in its relations with its citizens is absolutely indifferent to all forms of religious opinion and religious teaching; and as regards any funds raised, either directly by the State or indirectly under its authority, one form of religious opinion has as full a right to share in the appropriation of such funds as another.

“ The majority in any locality elect the School Board, who will naturally adopt this form of religious education which is agreeable to themselves, and so far as education goes they levy the rates exclusively for their own purposes.

“ Then what becomes of the minority? They are offered a religious education as well as the majority, and you offer them a form of education paid for out of the rates which they cannot use, and will you tell me that that is political justice or religious equality?

“ This Bill proposes to establish out of the rates a religious education which everybody is to pay for and

only a portion to use. Is that what the Liberal Party understand by religious equality?

"We are told that the minority need not use the religion paid for with their money, and that they receive complete and adequate protection under a conscience clause. Nothing reveals a more complete and utter misapprehension of the whole question than to suppose that so radical an injustice can be cured by a conscience clause. . . .

"It is our doctrine who sit on this side the House that a tax levied on the entire community must be enjoyed by the whole community." (Second reading debate, March 18th, 1870.)

MR. ASQUITH ON VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS.

“ In my judgment denominational schools must be helped, not because subscribers have a grievance, but because the schools themselves are inefficient. It is from a purely educational point of view that I gladly acquiesce in any additional contribution which is needed. . . .

“ I admit as a practical man that denominational schools are an indispensable part of our educational system. *You cannot get rid of them*, because you cannot find any practical substitute for them. Three millions of children are educated in them at present. . . . *There is no doubt that they are popularly supported.* The question is what is the right way to deal with them.” (May, 1902, second reading.)

CHAPTER I.

THE PASSING OF THE ACT OF 1870.

Now that the Government is definitely pledged to an "Education Bill" in the present Parliament," it behoves Catholics to prepare for the struggle by an intelligent understanding of the question as a whole. To know what has been done, and what has been attempted in educational legislation, is the best possible way of arming ourselves against future attacks on our schools.

The Education question as we understand it to-day goes back only to 1870.

Prior to that the difficulty was how to ensure that every child should get an education adequate to his needs.

Since 1870 it has been a fight for religious freedom and the just administration of funds raised by public bodies for educational purposes.

Before 1870 everybody agreed that something should be done to prevent the children growing up in ignorance, as many were growing up in every part of the land.

The provision of schools, and attendance of the children were voluntary, and the only State aid was a grant paid to such schools as submitted to Government supervision or inspection.

In 1870 the Liberal Government introduced an

Education Bill that would have settled the question once for all. It was absolutely impartial in its provisions and distinguished by a breadth of view that has never since been equalled. It combined the principles of "religious equality" and "popular control," of which we hear so much to-day, but which are so conspicuously absent from all Liberal legislation.

Mr. Forster proposed to divide the whole country into districts, and to create School Boards, with power to levy a rate for educational purposes.

These Boards were to be elected by the ratepayers for the purpose of supplying the defects and filling up the gaps in our educational system.

They were to have power to aid existing schools, or to build new ones, or both. If they aided one school in their district they were to aid all, and were not to discriminate on religious or other grounds. In the schools *founded* by the Boards the Bill proposed that the local authority should decide upon the kind of religious teaching according to circumstances. As the Bill was introduced, there might be either a Catholic, or Church of England, or Nonconformist school *built* and *maintained* out of the rates just as Council Schools are provided to-day.

The Bill was read a first time on February 7th, 1870, and the second reading fixed for March 14th. Between the first and second reading the Nonconformists were agitating against the Government proposal to trust the people, and their impartiality on religious grounds, and upon the second reading of the Bill, an amendment was moved by Mr. Dixon, who,

though a Churchman, was chairman of a Nonconformist league, to the effect that the School Board should not have the power of choosing the kind of religious teaching, so *the first official move of the Nonconformists in 1870 was to prevent the possibility of popular control in the schools.* Attempts were made by a small section of Nonconformists to abolish religious teaching altogether, but the most determined efforts were made to secure what was called unsectarian and undenominational teaching, although they were unable to say what this meant. One deputation of Congregationalists said to Mr. Forster that they considered other people's teaching to be sectarian, whilst Mr. Richards, one of their members, admitted that they didn't quite know what they *meant* by the terms "secular and unsectarian," so they used both words to get over the difficulty.

The chief arguments against the admission of denominational teaching into the rate-aided schools were—(1) that the Church of England, having built the greatest number of schools, would receive the greatest benefit, and (2) that it would not be possible to permit Catholic teaching in England without also permitting it in Ireland. This argument was advanced by Mr. Dixon, and two of the leading Nonconformist speakers.

In 1858 Church schools numbered 19,599 with 1,200,000 scholars, or *three-fourths of all the children in the schools.* British schools were 1,131, with 150,000 children. There were in addition 980 other Nonconformist schools, 750 Catholics and 120 factory schools. The schools educating *one-eighth* of the

children were selected as the model of the National system.

The second reading debate extended over three days, and five weeks were spent in Committee.

During the second reading debate, Sir W. Harcourt (then Mr. W. V. Harcourt) gave a splendid definition of religious equality that is worth quoting in full, and that ought to be inscribed on the forefront of every denominational appeal for educational justice.

Speaking on March 18th, he said:—

“If there is any principle to which the party on this side of the House is pledged more than another, and which is the corner-stone of the Liberal majority, it is the principle of religious equality, which was decided upon the hustings in 1868. Now what is the doctrine of religious equality? If I understand the doctrine it is this—that the State in its relations with its citizens is absolutely indifferent to all forms of religious opinion and religious teaching, and as regards any funds raised, either directly by the State or indirectly under its authority, one form of religious opinion has as full a right to share in the appropriation of such funds as another. . . . The majority in any locality elect the School Board, who will naturally adopt that form of religious education which is peculiar to themselves, and, so far as religious education goes, levy the rates exclusively for their own purposes.

“Then, what becomes of the minority? They are offered a religious education which does not suit them. It must not be said that they can get a secular education. I presume that the minority require a

religious education as well as the majority, and you offer them a form of education paid for out of the rates which they cannot use; and will you tell me that that is political justice or religious equality? . . . The Bill proposes to establish out of the rates a religious education which everybody is to pay for, and only a portion to use. Is that what the Liberal party understand by religious equality? We are told that the minority need not use the religion paid for with their money, and that they receive complete and adequate protection by a Conscience Clause.

“Nothing reveals a more complete and utter misapprehension of the whole conditions of the question than to suppose that so radical an injustice could be cured by a Conscience Clause. It is like saying to the minority, ‘We have made you pay for a dinner; but if you wish we will be so liberal and gracious as to allow you not to eat it.’ Of course if you forced a man to eat what disagreed with him, an *additronal* injustice would be perpetrated; but that does not cure the original injustice of making a man pay for what he did not want and could not use. . . . *It is not the doctrine of the gentlemen opposite, but it is ours, who sit on this side, that a tax levied upon the whole community is to be enjoyed by the whole community*, I know that that is not the doctrine of the Bill, and that is why you are so fond of it.” (Report of National Education Union, pp. 104—106.)

The struggle upon the religious teaching went on, and not only the discretion as to the kind, but the power to give it at all was taken out of the Bill.

The Government steadily refused to make any provision for it on the ground that they could not do so "without adopting some formulary which would be contrary to the whole principle of the Bill."

Mr. Cowper-Temple proposed a compromise, which is the only possible compromise, and which was embodied in the Act of 1902 by Mr. Balfour. It is important to remember that the Cowper-Temple *clause*, which is the root of all the educational injustice in this country, is *not* the compromise actually proposed by Mr. Cowper-Temple in 1870.

There is no compromise about the clause as it now stands in the Act. It was an absolute and unconditional surrender to the Nonconformist section, and resulted in the establishment and endowment from the rates of Nonconformist religious teaching only.

Whilst the Bill still proposed that the School Boards should *aid* all kinds of schools, Mr. Cowper-Temple proposed as the compromise, and it was a real compromise, that whilst they should still be allowed to *aid* denominational schools, in all schools *founded* from the rates, no distinctive formulary should be taught.

The Government adopted the amendment, but applied it to *all* schools aided from the rates, and so fastened upon the country the injustice which was only partially remedied by the Act of 1902.

The School Boards being thus forbidden by law to give Catholic and Anglican teaching in the schools, fell back on a kind of spiritual skilly, and the advocates of this kind of religious teaching now tell us that the School Boards adopted it because the country

was satisfied with it, the real truth being that they had no option between that and secular education, which the country certainly did *not* want; and which was the only alternative.

The Act was passed only after repeated assurances, (1) that it was intended to supplement and not to destroy the existing voluntary school system; (2) that under no possible circumstances could the rate exceed 3d. in the pound.

Under the Act each district had a limited choice as to whether it would have a School Board or not.

In every School Board district every Catholic, every Churchman, and every ratepayer, no matter what his religious belief, had to pay for a school which was Nonconformist in all but name.

By excluding denominational teaching and surroundings, and compelling all teachers to conform to the Cowper-Temple test, where religion was tolerated, they secured a Nonconformist teaching and atmosphere, and, in fact, many of the old Nonconformist schools were continued as Board Schools on exactly the same lines as before.

CHAPTER II.

THE WORKING OF THE ACT OF 1870.

WE have seen how the Education Act of 1870 was passed, chiefly, as was frequently stated in the House of Commons, to supplement the voluntary schools and fill up the gaps in our educational system.

As introduced, it was an Education Bill, with the sole object of covering the land with schools and providing an opportunity for every child to receive an adequate education.

As it left the House it was totally transformed in character and aim.

During the debates, which were chiefly remarkable for the hostility of the Nonconformist section to any proposal to treat the voluntary schools with common fairness, it was changed from a Bill to supplement and aid the voluntary schools on the same terms as Board schools, into an Act which, as its advocates admitted in 1876, it was hoped would destroy the denominational schools and cover the land with Nonconformist, or, as they called them, "unsectarian" schools. Under the Act, whilst every person in a School Board district was compelled to pay the rate, the Catholic and the Church school could not receive a penny from the amount raised from all denominations, except as payment of fees of poor children "*if it was thought fit*" (Sect. 25).

There was a certain amount of choice as to whether

any district should have a School Board, and wherever Nonconformists were strong a Board was formed voluntarily. If the supply of schools was not considered sufficient by the Education Department they could compel the formation of a Board; also, if the owners or trustees of a school closed their school, and it was not "forthwith" replaced, the Department stepped in and compelled the election of a School Board and the provision of a Board school. The majority of the School Boards were formed in one of these two ways.

Before the Act of 1870 we had Catholic, Church of England, and Wesleyan schools, all having in common the principle of authority in matters of faith; on the other hand, we had the Nonconformist denominational schools and schools carried on by a group of the Nonconformists, under the title of the British and Foreign School Society; these were banded together in the denial of all authority on spiritual matters. The new Board schools were created on the model of the British schools, and had no authority to teach any religious principles. Before the Act the State was neutral between these two systems. The Bill as introduced was also absolutely impartial, but when the Act came into force the State for the first time ranged itself definitely on the side of the Nonconformist and against the Church and Catholic schools.

The Act of 1870 provided the schools, but it did not compel attendance, though the School Boards had the power to make bye-laws compelling attendance in their districts. Several Nonconformist attempts to

create universal School Boards, and to make attendance compulsory, had been defeated by large majorities, when, in 1876, the Conservative Government introduced and carried into law (in spite of the opposition of these very Nonconformists) a measure of compulsory attendance. The debates on this Bill are very instructive, as showing the real aims of Liberals in 1870. They prove also that even as early as five years from the Act of 1870 coming into force complaints were made of the unfair competition of these Board schools, that the School Board system was costly and unpopular, and that on their merits the voluntary schools, with all their disadvantages, beat the Board schools at every point.

By this time the Nonconformists had realised what a very powerful political weapon they had in the Board schools. Mr. Forster stated "that the Dissenters had acquired almost a vested right in Board schools."

There were then about 1,749 School Boards, most of which had been formed by compulsion and against the wishes of the people. Of these only about 870 had schools of their own. For a short time after the passing of the Act of 1870 the denominations were encouraged to build new schools, and building grants were given in aid of such schools up to December 31st, 1870, after which no application was entertained, and the School Boards had the right of supplying all the accommodation in any district. (Section 6.) The Education Department had the power under Section 98 to refuse grants to unnecessary schools, a power which has been used to prevent the building of many Catholic and Church schools.

Most Catholics will remember the long fight of Father Robert Smith, of Nelson, before he obtained recognition of his school; we have also the Low Valley School, near Barnsley, as a recent object lesson in this matter. Morley, Saltash and Luddenfoot are other cases in point, Catholic children being compelled to attend Wesleyan or Council schools. The Board of Education must publish an account of any such proceedings, and in the report for 1908 a Church school is listed as being unnecessary, and the grant refused on that ground. In another report the grant is refused to two Catholic schools for the same reason.

The Nonconformists did all in their power to destroy voluntary schools and to force School Boards upon the country by closing their schools, and in other ways.

During the debate of 1876, Mr. Hubbard said:—

“ Either the Birmingham League or the Liberation Society issued a strong recommendation to the effect that wherever the British and Foreign School Society had an opportunity of making a deficiency in the school accommodation of a parish they should shut their schools, so that Board Schools might be there established, and they did so. But in some cases where that proceeding had not the effect of closing the denominational schools, they came again to the Department and asked to be allowed to re-open their schools on the same terms as before.” (National Education Union Report, p. 149)

About 1892, the advice to push on Board schools was given in Manchester at the annual meeting of

the Liberation Society, again with a political object, and not upon educational grounds. The same course was adopted, and for the same reasons, after the passing of the Act of 1902 and of the 1,501 Nonconformist voluntary schools in the report for 1902, no less than 733 had been closed or transferred to the Councils up to June 31st, 1910.

In these schools, as is admitted by their advocates, and, as was specially stated in the *Manchester Guardian* report, *re* the transferred schools at Accrington, "the religious teaching is exactly what it was whilst they were in the hands of the denominations."

The Act of 1870 contained another provision that was grossly unjust to Catholic and Church schools. By Section 97 (2) it was provided that the Government grant to any school should not for any year exceed the income of the school from other sources. This pressed very hardly on voluntary schools in poor districts, since, though it applied equally to Board schools, any deficiency in their local income was made up from the rates, and the full grant obtained, whilst in poor districts a special grant was also given to the Board schools.

But efficient voluntary schools were punished for their poverty, although they did their work better and cheaper than the Board schools. To understand this, we will take the cost per child for working expenses or "maintenance" in the various schools for 1875: Catholic school, £1. 9s. 5d.; Church of England School, £1. 11s. 11½d.; British or Wesleyan school, £1. 12s. 2½d.; Board school, £1. 16s. 11d.

The grant earned was: Voluntary schools, 12s. 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. (one opponent gave the grant earned by Catholics as 12s. 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.); in Board schools 11s. 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ d., so that at a much less cost the voluntary schools gauged by the same test, earned 1/5 per child more than the rate-aided and costly Board schools. The voluntary, and particularly the Catholic schools, had still other disadvantages in the number of free scholars. Board schools had 1·89 per cent., Church schools 2 per cent., Nonconformist schools 2·17, and the Catholic schools the large number of 12·23 per cent.; so that whilst the Board schools, with only 1 in 50 of the poorest, at a cost of 37/-, earned a grant of 11s. 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ d., the Catholic schools, educating the poorest children, with 1 free scholar in every 8, and spending nearly 7/6 per child less than the Board school, earned 1s. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per child more than its rate-aided rival. But the Liberal Government in 1870 selected the poorest and most efficient schools for fines and penalties, not for slackness or inefficiency, but for *poverty*. For the year 1875 the deductions from grants on account of poverty in the voluntary schools amounted to £28,000.

In 1875, as in 1911, we had all kinds of discreditable charges brought against Catholic and Church schools.

I have investigated many of these charges, and almost invariably they apply threefold to Nonconformist, as compared with Catholic schools. In 1875 much was urged against any concession to voluntary schools, on the ground that they made a profit out of Government grants and school pence, and required no

voluntary contribution, which, according to the Nonconformist, was the sole justification for their existence. Viscount Sandon, in reply to this, gave the number of the different denominations. There were 5 Catholic schools so supported, 130 Church of England schools, and 180 Nonconformist schools, out of a total of 598 Catholic, 9,446 Church, and 2,086 Nonconformist schools.

Another charge frequently made is that we have received building grants for our schools, and some of these are not now used as schools, therefore the State has a right to confiscate our buildings. Here, again, Nonconformists top the list. In 1902 the Government issued a return of such grants, which states that they were made to 4,965 Church schools, 713 Nonconformist schools, and 87 Catholic schools. Of these every single Catholic school was being used for educational purposes in 1902, whilst 1 in 11 of the Church schools, and 1 in 3 of the Nonconformist schools are not now used as schools. That is, whilst 789 Protestant schools which had received building grants have been given up, not a single Catholic school has ceased to be used for the purpose for which the grant was given.

The following extract from the Government report for 1898 throws an interesting light on the question :

“In the 12 years ending on the 31st December, 1882, building grants to the amount of £312,000 were paid by the Education Department on the completion of the erection or enlargement of 1,572 schools and 933 teachers' residences, affording new or improved accommodation for 280,146 scholars. These grants

were met by local contributions to the amount of £1,348,169, exclusive of the value of sites given gratuitously. The great majority of the remaining voluntary schools which have come under inspection since 1870 have been erected, enlarged, or improved without Government aid, at a cost to the promoters which has been estimated as amounting to at least £11,000,000."

Contrast this with the paragraph immediately following:—

"The School Boards have availed themselves freely of the power of borrowing. . . . Up to April 1st, 1899, we have sanctioned 13,480 loans, amounting to £37,150,310 2s. 3d., to 2,178 School Boards," etc.

Again:—

"Grants under Section 97 of the Act of 1870 as amended, amounting to £203,549 8s. 1d., have been paid to 713 School Boards for the year ending 28th September, 1897."

So much for Board schools. Here is the other side:—

"In the case of voluntary schools, the voluntary contributions towards 'maintenance' subscribed in 1898 amounted to 6s. 1d. per child in average attendance.

"It should be observed that this amount does not include the contributions paid towards provision as distinguished from maintenance."

This means that in addition to paying probably the greater part of the £5,000,000 rates levied in the year 1898, and in addition to a vast amount spent on building, repairing, and expended in ground

rents, interest, etc., the supporters of the voluntary schools paid towards the support of those schools for the year 1898 alone, the enormous sum of £766,206 as voluntary contributions. This does not include large sums paid from endowment, school pence, and other local sources, by which Catholics raised £21,000, and Churchmen £384,342. These items bring the total from local sources for all voluntary schools to £1,156,868, instead of the £766,000 credited in the Government table.

Another interesting quotation from this Report shows how the School Boards were formed:—

“Up to January 1st, 1899, Boards have been established in 188 county and municipal boroughs, excluding London. In 52 of these the election was *compulsory* to supply a deficiency, which could not be met without the aid of rates. In the remaining 136 cases the election was ordered on the voluntary application of the municipal authorities.

“Of the 2,322 School Boards in towns and rural districts, 1,076 have been elected *under compulsory* orders from the Education Department, and 204 to meet the deficiency caused by the closing of schools by the managers, while the remaining 1,042 have been called into existence by the voluntary application of the ratepayers.”

“During the year 1898 we have issued 14 orders creating new School Boards in parishes. Of these Boards *seven were formed compulsorily*.”

It is very evident, then, that the Act of 1870 would never have become popular, and did not meet the wishes of the majority of the people. This becomes

still more evident when we see what was done for so many years without the assistance of a single penny from the rates, but that must be left for another chapter.

In the meantime, just as in 1870, Sir W. Harcourt fully justified the claim of the voluntary schools to a full share of the rate which was, and is, denied by his party, another Liberal opponent of voluntary schools in the debate of 1876 once for all disposed of the cry that the voluntary schools are privately controlled by the parson and the squire.

On July 10th, 1876, a Radical Nonconformist, Mr. Richards, proposed that all schools should be placed under public management.

Speaking on this, the Marquis of Hartington said :

“ My hon. friend insists, as a preliminary to universal compulsion, that public elementary schools should be placed under public management. But in one sense they are now under public management. Public elementary schools, *whether denominational or Board Schools*, are subject to inspection by public officials; they have to comply with certain rules and regulations laid down for them by Parliament and a public department, and, above all, they have to submit to a time-table conscience clause, which has been prescribed for them by Parliament. But what my hon. friend wants is not merely *public* management, but *local* management, that is, management by some local body, by some locally elected authority. It is quite clear that such a change as that would be extremely distasteful to the managers of denominational schools, *and the question the House has to*

decide is whether the change is required in the interests of education, or in the interests of freedom of conscience and religious liberty."

After arguing against the amendment of a fellow Liberal, he continues:—

"He does not meet the whole of the conscience grievance by the amendment he has proposed. He does not meet the conscience grievance of Roman Catholics, or, in a less degree, that of some members of the Established Church. To a Roman Catholic, a Board school, where no religious instruction is given, is just as much a stumbling block as any religious instruction that is given in a denominational school to the child of a Dissenting parent. It seems to me that the only security which it is in our power to provide is the establishment of some power to strictly and effectually enforce the conscience clause."

The Marquis of Hartington here put his finger on the besetting sin of every educational proposal that has come from the Nonconformist party. They claim privileges for themselves and their teaching whilst denying the most elementary rights to all others. Not only must we pay for their teaching, but our children must take what suits them, or go without, a principle which Sir W. Harcourt declared was religious inequality and political injustice, and opposed to the essential principles of the Liberal party.

CHAPTER III.

THE WORKING OF THE ACT OF 1870—(*Continued*).

THE more we examine the Act of 1870 the more we realise the unfairness towards the voluntary schools.

It is generally understood as having simply endowed from the rates contributed by the whole community one particular class of school.

It did more than that. It heaped up privileges upon the Board School system, and put every possible obstacle in the way of the voluntary schools and all under a show of fairness.

By the *letter* of the Act each kind of school could earn the same Government grant for efficiency, but if the income (from subscriptions, etc.), of the voluntary school did not equal the grant, that was cut down to the amount of the subscriptions. Of course, any deficiency in the Board school was made up from the *rates*.

But further privileges were given to Board schools. The Boards had the power of remitting the school fees of the children in attendance at *Board schools*, whilst, if the School Board "thought fit," they might pay the fees of children attending the voluntary schools in School Board districts; but it was argued that if we were so anxious to educate the children we should be willing to pay or remit the fees and make up the deficiency out of our own pockets.

In 1876 power to pay the fees of poor children

attending all schools and *in all districts*, was given to the Boards of Guardians, and as over £60,000 was paid in this way for the year 1890, it will be seen that the hardship under the Act of 1870 was no light matter.

After the period of grace for voluntary schools had expired, the School Boards had the first right to supply any deficiency in school accommodation, and by the exercise of the power many voluntary schools, and particularly many Catholic schools, were declared by the School Boards to be unnecessary. Also, by Section 97 of the Act, if the total rate did not produce a certain sum per child, the Government were to make a special grant to the School Board, so as to make up this amount, and "under this section, as amended by the Act of 1876, 713 School Boards received no less than £203,540 for the year ending September, 1897."

We will now turn to the progress made by the two kinds of schools from the time the Act came into operation. That is the true test of the popular estimation and approval of the policy.

After December 31st, 1870, every new voluntary school had to be built and furnished ready for occupation out of the pockets of the promoters, and *after overcoming the hostility of the School Board*. Every Board school *built*, was built partly at the cost of the Catholics and Churchmen, who were also building and maintaining their own schools without a penny from the rates.

For every school *transferred* from a Nonconformist denomination to the School Board, the managers and

supporters got exactly the same kind of religious teaching under the School Board, and were saved the trouble and cost of managing and maintaining it as a *voluntary* school.

It is difficult to get at the exact number of the schools existing in 1870, which were afterwards recognised as elementary schools under the new Act.

One authority mentions 350 Catholic and 6,382 Church schools, and though this is probably correct, we will take as our starting point the year 1872, being the first for which the Government returns are given, and the first also for which it is possible to compare them with Board schools.

The figures for different years may be seen in the Financial Reform Almanac (and probably in other books of reference). From about 1876 this work gives fairly complete summaries of the comparative figures given in the reports and statistics of the Education Department, so that we can find the number of schools, amount raised as voluntary contributions, school fees, endowment, etc., but we must notice that *in nearly if not all the comparative tables of expenses and income, the amounts refer to "maintenance" or working expenses only*, and do not take into account any money spent on building, repairing, or furnishing our schools. These amounts must be obtained from other sources. Similarly *the amount given under the head of "rates" is only for maintenance, and does not include building, etc.*

Take for example the year 1901. On pages 272-5, we get the particulars as to income of different classes of schools, "rates" for Board schools being given as

£2,704,564 for the year 1899. But if we want to get at the total amount of rate for that particular year we must turn to page 268 of the same volume, and we shall find that the amount raised is nearly double that given in the comparative tables, being altogether £5,275,749.

The number of Church schools in 1872 was 7,328, and this had increased to 9,446 in 1875, and 13,772 in 1899. The total amount for "maintenance" raised by Churchmen, in addition to paying the rates, was £1,203,204 in 1875, and for the year 1891 they raised out of their own pockets no less than £1,680,386 for "maintenance" only.

Catholic schools in 1875 numbered 598, and in 1899 had increased to 1,106. We raised in 1875 £92,000, and in 1891 the enormous sum of £177,348, and this in addition to building and furnishing our new schools. The year 1891 is taken because, after that date, the Act giving a grant in place of school fees came into operation, and the schools were made free. Therefore 1891 was the last year in which the voluntary schools had to depend on voluntary subscriptions and school pence over and above the grant they earned for efficiency in common with the Board schools.

At any time during this period they could have had far greater material advantages in the Board schools without putting their hands in their pockets for anything but school fees, which were paid in all schools alike. But to their honour, be it said, that whilst the Catholics, the poorest in the country, built no less than 658 new schools from 1872 to 1900, and,

in addition to this, raised as voluntary subscriptions alone £2,109,000, the Church of England built in the same time 7,523 new schools, and raised £19,000,000 in subscriptions, besides all the other expenses.

During this time the wealthy Nonconformists, whose religious ideal was satisfied in the Board schools, had added only about 500 to the schools they had in 1872, and raised only a little over £3,000,000 against the £21,000,000 of the Catholic and the Churchman.

In the same period there were either built or transferred to the School Board 7,715 schools at a total cost to the country of over £100,000,000, paid by all sections, and probably the greatest part paid by Catholics and Churchmen.

We often refer to the number of schools the Church of England has transferred to the School Boards. Let us be just all round. Church schools and Board schools have the common bond of Protestantism, and the members of the Church of England vary from the very High Church party that poses as Catholic, to men who are more Nonconformist than Nonconformists themselves. The actual difference between the teaching in some Anglican churches and the nearest Nonconformist church is imperceptible, and many people who called themselves good Churchmen had no hesitation in sending their children to the better-equipped Board school.

In the early days also Churchmen did not quite realise the importance of the transfer, and it is chiefly since Nonconformist societies and the Liberal politician organised the Board school system as a

feeding ground for their party that the difference has been so marked.

We must also remember that if the Churchman has given up about 1,000 schools, he has built and opened in the same period nearly 8,000 new ones, and made many sacrifices for the same cause that Catholics are fighting for, and they ought to receive credit for their work.

I am not minimising the credit to Catholics for not surrendering a single school in spite of all our poverty, but we must judge the Churchman and the Nonconformist on *their* principles just as we judge Catholics according to a Catholic standard.

In a review of the question as a whole, we must be fair to all parties, and the Catholic position is greatly strengthened by the fact that we are not, as is so often argued, a Catholic minority fighting for existence against an overwhelming Protestant majority, *but that on the contrary we are part of a majority of the country*, which desires the assertion of parental right, and denominational teaching, as opposed to a noisy minority which, for purely political and selfish reasons, desires to force its views upon the country in violation of all its own principles and professions.

According to a recent Free Church census in Manchester the Free Church total is 25 per cent.; this, added to "persons allied with other sects or undenominational 7 per cent.," makes 32 per cent., or just equal to the number of the Church of England, who with Catholics 13 per cent., Jews and Unitarians, form a clear majority of the population.

The Free Church Year Book, 1913, gives the

number of Easter communicants of the Church of England as 2,428,933 in 1912. Against this the *total membership of all the Free Churches* is given as 2,148,598; so that the Church of England alone has a majority of 280,000; yet this minority of the country claims the right to dictate the educational policy of the nation, and to force its will upon the majority.

CHAPTER IV.

NONCONFORMISTS AND EDUCATION.

THERE is nothing more pronounced in the history of popular education than the hatred of denominational, or, as they call it, "Sectarian" teaching, professed by all shades of Nonconformists.

Dr. Clifford is not more extreme and uncompromising than the mildest and most plausible of his colleagues.

With hardly an exception they agree with the resolution of the Primitive Methodist Committee (issued Feb. 5, 1912): "That no settlement will be acceptable which gives any foothold to sectarian privilege, and which indeed is not wholly unsectarian and absolutely civic and national. The Committee also declares its profound conviction that no place must be left in any settlement for 'right of entry,' and 'contracting out,' and it appeals to the Government to pay no heed to proposals from self-elected educational settlement committees."

It is high time that we understood that the Nonconformists will be satisfied with nothing less than the extirpation of Catholic and Anglican teaching in any school receiving aid from either rates or taxes, and so far as they are able they are determined to prevent our children receiving a Catholic education, whilst at the same time they will compel the Catholic

parent, not only to pay for the teaching of their religious principles, but to send his children into the public schools to be educated in an atmosphere and surroundings fatal to the growth and development of his faith.

It may be said that this book is biased, but it is written from the standpoint of equal rights for all, and the statements made are simple facts that may be verified by any reader who will take the trouble to do so.

If Nonconformists are condemned, or if one political party is opposed, it is because by their action and policy from 1807 down to 1912, they have steadily and consistently tried to deprive Catholics and Churchmen of their civil and educational rights, and make it impossible for us to exercise the freedom which they claim for themselves, but refuse to all others.

The great need is a common agreement upon the meaning of the terms used, and it will be found that those who oppose the rights of the Catholic have a special interpretation for all terms used in the controversy.

It is difficult to acquit the Nonconformist and Liberal of conscious hypocrisy on the education question. They do not lack intelligence, and are united in denouncing the interference of the State in religious matters whilst speaking on the Liberation platform, but when they turn to the inevitable education resolution, the same speakers are equally insistent that the State must step into the schools and endow the form of religious teaching that is

acceptable to them, whilst it penalises all who do not accept their views.

Seven or eight years ago, at a Congress of the Free Churches, the present Chairman of the Lancashire Congregational Union, Mr. G. N. Ford, moved an amendment to the Education resolution, that in accordance with their professions, the instruction in the elementary schools should be purely secular, even Bible reading being eliminated.

Out of some thousands of delegates he found *eleven* supporters.

At a Conference of Passive Resisters held in Manchester a few years back, a Congregational minister made a most eloquent appeal to his brethren to be consistent, and to agree to the exclusion of the Bible from the schools, out of deference to the prejudices of the Roman Catholics. Needless to say, he was not successful, and a few months later he appeared in the police-court to protest against "Rome on the rates."

So also did the local Secretary of the Liberation Society, who, along with Mr. Ford, at the close of the meeting came up and congratulated the writer, who spoke in opposition, on having put the case "in a nutshell," and both declared the Catholic case to be unanswerable. But there is a still further proof of hypocrisy, whether conscious or otherwise. The Liberal Government and the Nonconformist members of the Parliament that passed the Act of 1870, and to whom denominational teaching was anathema, passed an Education Act for Scotland. There a sect, which in England is Nonconformist, is the Established State religion. The Presbyterian Church holds the

same position in Scotland that the Anglican Church holds in England. They enjoy the ancient endowments just as does the Anglican Establishment. They have a Catechism quite as sectarian, and much narrower than the Catechism of the Church of England, but the Nonconformist Parliament that would not have *any* Catechism or formulary taught in the English rate built Board schools gave full permission to their co-religionists over the border to teach their Catechism to their heart's content, and, whilst in England we were compelled to support a so-called "unsectarian," but really *interdenominational Nonconformist* religious teaching in the Board schools, our co-religionists in Scotland are compelled to pay for the teaching of a Catechism that consigns them to eternal damnation.

This has been the Nonconformist policy from the beginning, and the only element of consistency in their conduct all along has been to fill the pockets, and work for the political and social aggrandisement of their friends, and punish, fine, and persecute their opponents when and wherever they had the opportunity.

The apathy of Catholics on educational matters is almost criminal, and there is very little evidence that they understand the question as they ought. Many of them are so saturated with "Liberal" sophistries as to argue against our rights. "We are a minority in a Protestant land and cannot expect justice." "Who pays the piper must call the tune," and such-like fallacies.

We base our claim on the inherent and inalienable

right of the parent. This right knows no politics. We base it on the Ten Commandments, and here again politics must give way.

But those who use these "arguments" do not see that our opponents make the very same claim. The difference is that we ask for what we are willing to concede to all; they claim for themselves what they refuse to us.

Where is the difference between Dr. Clifford's demand for a Christian unsectarian school "within easy reach of every family," or the Nonconformist claim to drag down the religious teaching of the 99 Anglican children to the level of the odd Nonconformist child, and the most uncompromising claim of the Catholic for a Catholic school, Catholic teacher, and Catholic control? We demand a Catholic school with Catholic surroundings and atmosphere, wherever we have children enough to justify the provision of a school. We obtain this by selection.

They demand for any single child in any district a Nonconformist atmosphere and surroundings, and they obtain them wherever they have the power by excluding Catholic and Church teaching.

It is a very common thing for Catholics to admit, and probably 999 out of 1,000 Catholics will admit, that the Nonconformist has a grievance against the Church of England in country districts. Why? Has the Nonconformist rights that the Anglican or the Catholic does not possess?

So far from suffering grievance, injustice, or disability of any kind, from the first passing of the Act of 1870 to the present day, the Nonconformist, even

under the Act of 1902, has privileges and advantages denied to all others.

Why will Catholics persist in taking him at his own valuation instead of finding out the truth?

We have Catholic members in the House of Commons who are pledged to remove the grievances of the Nonconformist under the Act of 1902. What are those grievances? What Nonconformist has even pointed them out? They have one and only one, "Rome on the rates." They oppose the Anglican schools because some of them approximate to "Roman" teaching. The Nonconformist has exactly the same rights as the poorest Catholic—no more, no less. Why should the County Council build a school for the Nonconformist to teach his sectarian formulary, and not build one for the Catholic to teach the penny Catechism? When that question can be answered logically the Nonconformist grievance is proved, but not till then.

In an inquiry at Chorley in December, 1912, the case of the *County Council* was that it was their duty to provide a County school for the Nonconformists, and refuse the extension of the Church of England school.

The Council schools are Nonconformist in all but name, the Bible reading is the teaching of a sectarian formulary within the meaning of the Act of 1870, therefore illegal. The Cowper Temple Clause is a Nonconformist test of the most stringent type imaginable, therefore their cry of "no tests for teachers" is a sham. The people have not the slightest control over the education, either secular or

religious. Popular control is a myth. Finally, the system of taxing the whole people for schools built to teach the religion of a section, is, in the words of one of their own trusted leaders, "neither religious equality nor political justice." The Nonconformist shibboleths are empty sounding phrases, and have no meaning.

In an article published (February 6, 1912), the Rev. Sylvester Horne, M.P., boasts of the "toleration" of the Free Churches. We have had forty years of toleration, as understood by Nonconformists. It consists in an attempt to force upon our children their religious standard, an attempt made by men who by their position and wealth enjoy that free choice of schools which they deny the children of the poorer classes.

Is it too much to ask that they shall change their policy, and give us toleration as it is defined in any decent dictionary?

CHAPTER V.

HOW CONSERVATIVES TREATED THE BOARD SCHOOLS.

BEFORE discussing the much-abused Act of 1902, we will re-capitulate the events that led up to, and rendered necessary, the passing of that Act as a measure of justice to voluntary schools.

In 1870 the Government introduced a Bill that was perfectly fair to all schools, and to all denominations of ratepayers.

That Bill became an Act that gave everything to the people who had done least for education, whilst for those who had built schools and done what they could for the education of the youth of the country it had only penalties and disabilities of one kind or another (see Chap. I). The unjust regulations and requirements of the present Government have been justified by some Catholics on the ground that they apply equally to voluntary and to Council schools. This refers particularly to requirements as to air space, playgrounds, etc., involving the expenditure of large sums of money.

But in dealing with any such requirements it must always be borne in mind that whilst School Boards or Councils *could demand whatever amount they chose from the rates*, to which Catholics and Churchmen contributed in the same proportion as Nonconformists, any alterations or extension of our schools had to be paid for out of our own pockets, and in

addition to paying our share towards the cost of the public schools, which we could not in conscience use.

By the Act of 1870 the Board and voluntary schools were treated very differently, and though in some cases there was no *verbal* discrimination between them, in actual practice, voluntary schools were penalised in many ways by the provisions of the Act and the resulting conditions.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS.

Not one single penny of rate.

No real relief, although the poor children in Catholic schools numbered one in eight

The cost of these free admissions had to be made up out of our own pockets

Rates were paid on the schools buildings out of the pockets of the denomination.

The privilege of paying our share of this grant.

Cost of maintenance over and above Government Grant divided between school fees and subscription. Deficiency of subscriptions met by a corresponding reduction of Government Grant.

BOARD SCHOOLS.

The sole use and benefit of the Education Rate paid by all denominations in every Board School area.

Power to remit the fees of the poorer children (numbering 1 in 50), at the cost of the rates.

Rates were paid on the Buildings, but were taken from rates, so that *practically* they were free from rates.

Special grant for poor School Boards, under Sect. 97.

Cost of maintenance over and above Government Grant divided between school fees and rates.

Grant earned could not be reduced by failure to raise equal amount locally since it was raised from rates.

CONSERVATIVE ACT OF 1876.

By the Conservative Act of 1876 power to pay the school fees of poor children in all schools, and in all

school districts was given to the Boards of Guardians, and, in consequence of the increased cost of education, the restrictions as to the proportions of voluntary contributions and grant was modified, allowing the voluntary schools to receive any grant *earned* up to 17/6 per child irrespective of the amount of the voluntary subscriptions. This was a great boon to the poorer voluntary schools.

CONSERVATIVE ACT OF 1891.

Owing to the greater cost of education the payment of school fees was becoming a burden on the poorer people, and in lieu of fees or school pence the Government made a grant of 10s. per child *to all schools, voluntary and Board*, subject to certain conditions as to the provision of free education, etc. At this time most Catholic schools were made free, and were the first to give free education under this provision.

CONSERVATIVE ACT OF 1897.

The cost of education still increasing, and pressing more harshly on voluntary than on Board schools, the Government gave further aid to voluntary schools, *and increased the special grant to the poor Board school districts* (under section 97, of the Act of 1870) *from 7s. 6d. per child to 16s. 6d. per child*. The working cost per child had risen since 1891 (when the fee grant was given) from £1. 17s. 8d. to £2. 0s. 6d. in voluntary schools, and from £2. 7s. 2d. to £2. 13s. 2d. in Board schools.

To meet the growing difficulty the Government gave an aid grant of 5s. per child to *all* voluntary schools,

and increased the special grant in the poor Board school districts by 9s. per child, so that their legislation was fair to all parties, and it could not be said that they acted unfairly towards the Board schools, which, it must not be forgotten, had an unlimited command of the rates, the only check upon expenditure being the moderate members of the School Boards.

It goes without saying that in these days nothing can be done without money, and in education we require a great deal of money. We may also take for granted that when men are spending other people's money they are apt to be extravagant.

It is true that in 1870, and for many years after, there was room for a legitimate annual increase in the comparative cost of the schools, but it is also true that as time went on the increase in the cost of Board schools was out of all proportion to the results, and that a good deal was due to the desire to undersell the voluntary schools and squeeze them out of existence by the unfair competition of Board schools, on which any amount of money could be spent for the purposes of attracting the children, and inducing the parents to patronise them, by prizes and all kinds of other advantages. In 1870, when the Act was passed, the average cost of educating each child in the voluntary schools was £1. 5s. 5d. It has already been explained that this item of expenditure is called "maintenance," being the cost of the teachers, books, lighting, etc., but having nothing to do with building, repairing, cleaning or painting the school itself, or any such incidental expense. By the year 1876

when the next Act was passed, the cost was: Voluntary schools £1. 15s. 5d., Board schools, £2. 1s. 5d.

The estimated cost per child in the Bill of 1870 was £1. 10s. (and of the Bill of 1876 £1. 15s. per child), of which in the voluntary schools 10s. was to be provided by the State as grant, 10s. by parents, and the remaining third by the managers as subscriptions, etc. In 1891, when the "fee grant" Act was passed, the cost per child had risen to £1. 17s. 8d. in voluntary, and £2. 7s. 2d. in Board schools; for 1897, the year of the "*Aid Grant*" Act, it was: Voluntary, £2. 0s. 6d.; Board, £2. 13s. 2d.; whilst in 1902, when the *maintenance* of voluntary schools was made a charge upon the rates for the first time, it was £2. 6s. 4d. in voluntary; and £3. 0s. 9d. in Board schools.

Notwithstanding the much greater cost in the Board schools, and in spite of the fines and drawbacks, in 1876, the voluntary schools *received* 3d. per child higher grant than the Board schools, and were in 1891 only 9½d. per child behind the schools that were spending for each child an additional sum of 9s. 6d. and 12s. 8d. respectively more than the voluntary schools.

But figures give a very poor idea of the forces against which the voluntary schools were, and are still, contending.

Throughout the length and breadth of the land there are Liberal and Nonconformist Leagues of all kinds constantly working for their destruction. A powerful political press is ready to spread broadcast all kinds of lies and misrepresentations against our

schools. The columns of the Liberal and Nonconformist journals are open to any guttersnipe who chooses to dip his pen in the ink of slander and misrepresentation, and opportunity of reply or refutation is curtailed or refused altogether.

Any misrepresentation that could be obtained by trickery, or manipulating figures, and suppressing facts was given currency, and the process is still going on to an extent that is not realised except by the few who are interested in the education controversy.

We have the Liberation Society engaged in the exploiting of the Council schools; the Northern Counties Education League, comprised of Nonconformists, who are working incessantly for the extinction of the voluntary schools; and other kindred associations, all banded together for our destruction. Of the greatest and most unscrupulous of these organisations (the Free Church Councils) we shall speak further when we come to the Act of 1902.

In looking for information about one of the Acts favourable to voluntary schools, I met with the Financial Reform Almanac for the year 1898. This is a recognised Liberal authority, published by the Financial Reform Association, established in 1848, to advocate, amongst other things, "just taxation." The officials of the Association include many prominent supporters of the present Government.

Any impost upon the people for the purposes of carrying on the administration of the country is a tax, but for general convenience the word taxation is limited to monies raised for "national," as distinct from "local" administration, and levied by the

Imperial Parliament, the term "rates" being used to include and distinguish the various payments made to the County or City Council or Committee for expenditure on local matters.

The Financial Reform Association, then, stands for a just system of rating, and this involves the rates being raised, *and spent*, for the benefit of the *whole* community, and not for a section only.

In the year 1897 the Government had passed an Act giving assistance to voluntary schools, and grouping the schools so that the strong could help the weaker. They also passed an Act helping poor Board schools. I wish every Churchman and Catholic could read and understand the description given in this issue of their Annual Almanac, of the measure of relief and justice to our schools.

Remember that at this time it was only in those places having a School Board that the education rate was paid. It was *paid* by everybody, and no money was refused because the ratepayer was a Catholic or a Jew. The religious question arose only when it was being *spent*.

In this particular year the voluntary schools in Manchester were educating more than half the children in the City without a single penny from the rates, whilst the Board schools had no less than £85,000 from the rates for the education of less than half the children in the schools.

Yet we find the Association publishing a bitter and bigoted attack on the voluntary schools that were doing such a splendid work throughout the land, and upon the Government that gave them a little justice.

As the method is typical of what has been going on for years, it is worth quoting at length, so that the reader will see what kind of "argument" is used against our schools:—

"By Clause One, power is given to pay grant at different rates to town and country schools respectively, and accordingly by statutory rules it has been laid down that town schools shall receive a grant of 5s. 9d., and country schools of 3s. 3d. per head, these amounts being fixed upon a calculation based upon the number of schools in each category. Now this favour to towns seems inexplicable at first sight, for regard to educational requirements would have caused the larger grant to be made to the country schools. The object, however, was not so much to aid education as to enable these *misnamed* "voluntary" schools to compete with well-equipped Board schools in urban centres. This is at once flagitious in policy, and futile in result. In policy it is a prostitution of a majority to sectarian ends, in practice it will be found that these *priest-ridden* schools will *not* be successful competitors with Board schools. It is worthy of notice that Mr. Balfour on the 16th March, 1897, said that the Department 'would be governed by the circumstances of each case, and rural schools would not necessarily receive less than urban schools,' whereas we now see that the department has drawn a hard and fast line between 'town' and 'country' schools.

"To see a little more clearly what is the policy

which has placed so much in the hands of these Associations of voluntary schools, let us turn to the tables which will be found on the preceding pages. After quoting the income of *all Board and* voluntary schools, and giving 'rates' as £2,182,372, which, of course, was the cost for *maintenance only*, the total rate for the year being £4,560,000, he goes on to say: 'Now only £852,294 came from voluntary contributions, and £1,326 of this sum was paid to Board schools, that is to say, not £1 in £10 of the expenses was contributed voluntarily.' (I will deal with this point later.) Coming closer still, these schools, now called voluntary by Act of Parliament, show an average cost of maintenance per child of £1. 19s., of this £1. 8s. 9d. came from Government, and only 6s. 9½d. from subscriptions, the rest from miscellaneous sources. The effect of this Act of 1897 will be to add to the Government contribution, and to make it, say £1. 13s. 9d., out of a total of £1. 19s., and to reduce the subscriptions to an average of 1s. 9d. Still, they will be voluntary schools by Act of Parliament." (But the denomination had to find not 1/9, but 5/3 per child even after the aid grant was paid). . . . "The principle which is the same (in the case of all the associations) is very objectionable, viz., to hand over to the control of sectarians such large amounts of public money without adequate control. For, though the Act enables the department to require an audit, it is remarkable that the Government in the House resisted a proposal to place the 'voluntary schools' under the district auditor, as is the case

with Board schools, and now, by statutory rule, it is declared that the accounts *shall* be audited by some person specially approved by the Education Department.

“The Act does more than this; it abolishes the 17s. 6d. limit, which is a virtual withdrawal of the demand for a local contribution as a condition of a Government grant. ‘*It also exempts*’ *voluntary schools from rates.* (Italics theirs.) This last provision in some cases adds a very substantial sum to the extra amount per head given. Mr. Acland mentions St. George’s, Southwark, which would profit at 1s. 6d. per child in this way, making, with the 5s. special grant, 6s. 6d. per head, whereas the voluntary subscriptions only average 6s. 9d. But even this small difference disappears altogether, and much more is received, if the following estimate of the financial effect of this egregious measure be valid:—

“The real money value of the Act: £620,000
(say) a year from the taxes.

“£40,000 a year by repeal of the 17s. 6d. limit.

“£100,000 by abolition of rates.

“£200,000 a year (say) increase in grants to be earned.

“Total, £960,000 a year.

“Thus, according to the estimate of the Financial Reform writer, voluntary schools were being penalised as compared with Board schools to the extent of the last three items in his list, a total of £340,000 a year, by unjust discrimination in favour of the Board schools.

“He goes on to say that ‘the Act did nothing for education, it may even have hindered it. Sir John Gorst, who should have been in charge of it, sat mute and inglorious whilst Mr. Balfour tumbled it through the Commons. Sir John before his constituents is an unmuzzled person, and he spoke at Longton a few plain words, etc.’ Then is given, as *though in condemnation of this Act*, a quotation *which has nothing whatever to do with it.*”

This long but very important quotation follows a table of voluntary subscriptions, showing that in the case of nearly 10,000 schools the amount of subscription *per child* varied from 5s. to 7s. in 2,000 schools; and in the remaining 8,000 cases rose gradually from 7s. 6d. to 10s. (2,000 schools), 10s. to 15s. (2,690 schools), 15s. to 20s. per child (1,300 schools), 20s. to 30s. per child (1,000 schools), whilst in over 400 schools *for every child in the schools* the supporters gave as *voluntary subscriptions* from 30s. to 50s. per head.

This analysis of the subscription list is followed by the following remark, p. 286:—

“These figures show how ridiculous it is to call such denominational schools ‘voluntary,’ and yet by the Act of last session voluntary schools becomes a phrase recognised by Statute; heretofore only elementary schools were known.”

One would really think that those figures proved the opposite. Now to analyse the attack. First of all, in a table on page 271 we find that for every child in the voluntary schools *the supporters gave*

6s. 9½d., whilst every child in the Board schools *cost the rates* £1 1s. 2d., *of which about* 12s. *would be paid by those who gave the* 6s. 9d., making their contribution 18s. 9d., against 9s. 2d. per head given by the supporters of Board schools. The Government return for 1902 shows that the people paid in voluntary contributions alone more than £21,000,000 for the privilege of being voluntaryists. But schools and management were also provided voluntarily. So far as regards schools, the Government report for 1892 tells us (p. iv.): That more than 5,000 new schools *had been provided since 1870 at a cost exclusive of the value of sites, given gratuitously*, of at least £8,500,000, so here is another very good title to the name "voluntary schools." The Financial Reform man gives on p. 269 of his Almanac a little item of £424,000 for *administration of Board schools*, with less than 2,000,000 children, whilst not a penny is charged for the administration of voluntary schools, educating 2,500,000 children. There is, therefore, a triple title to the name voluntary schools, and all the gibes only add to the discredit of their enemies for suppressing half the facts and lying about the rest.

Turning to the attack on the schools, it will be noticed that in comparing the amount of voluntary subscriptions with the cost of the schools, he ignores all subscriptions except those officially recognised as "maintenance," and compares these with the cost of *all schools, both Board and voluntary*, a trick which is dishonest in the extreme. The fact that we contribute our share to all public funds is carefully sup-

pressed. Properly speaking, the figures should be compared with the amount spent on voluntary schools only, since all Government grants are given to all schools alike, and as the expenditure of Board schools in that year was more than half the total, it shows that about £1 in every £5 spent on the *voluntary* schools in the year mentioned was from voluntary contributions, and if we add the £500,000 for administration at the same rate as the Board schools, put to this the money spent on buildings, repairs, etc., as also the £530,000, which they were paying as rates and cost of management, the proportion raised by the denomination assumes a very different aspect.

We are entitled to take into account on the credit side of the voluntary schools *the whole of the local income*, which is really paid by their supporters, and half the total rates which they probably pay. They should also be credited with at least half the total Government grant, which is paid out of taxes levied upon the whole people, and not upon supporters of Board schools only; this for 1896 amounted to £6,368,422. We thus get the sum :—

CREDIT.

£1,368,000 local income.
 £2,285,630 half rate.
 £3,184,211 (half grant).
 £430,000 cost of administration.
 £100,000 rates paid on schools.

£7,367,841

DEBIT.

Government grants ... Total, £3,595,907

Paid by supporters of voluntary schools nearly £4,000,000 more than they receive from public money of all kinds.

This is not including anything spent on buildings, etc.

But our financial reformer trots out the invariable argument that the aid grant of 1897 would diminish subscriptions, and they would disappear. The answer to that is that they averaged *for the year 1902, five years after the aid grant was given, 6s. 10d. per child in attendance, which, with the exception of 1892, when the amount was 6s. 11d., was the highest figure for the twenty years 1882-1902.*

Just one more point regarding this veracious statistician. A good deal of ridicule is cast upon the increased grant to poor School Board districts. The matter is grossly misrepresented by making Mr. Acland say on p. 288 that of the 2,500 Board schools in the country about 800 would get relief, but many of the grants would be so small as to be ineffectual. The real truth is that of the 2,500 School Boards 800 would benefit, and we know, from a Government return, *that in this very year 1897 more than £203,000 was paid to 713 School Boards under this section.*

Examination of the Government returns certainly proves that "*majorities are prostituted to sectarian ends,*" but we also find that *it is invariably* Liberals and Nonconformists who are guilty of this prostitution, and that the Conservatives have been anything but niggardly in their treatment of Board schools, notwithstanding that these schools could dip into their rates to any extent they chose.

It was a very favourite argument with Nonconformists to say that aid to voluntary schools would reduce subscriptions. In 1876 it was said that to pay the fees of poor children would make them altogether dependent on public funds and do away with subscriptions. To refute this argument it is only necessary to point out that in the table of voluntary subscriptions, p. 70 of statistics, for 1901-2, in spite of the constantly increasing *rate*, from £1. 0s. 6d. *for every child in the Board Schools in 1875* to £1. 9s. 5d. per child in 1902, of which the supporters of voluntary schools *would pay about half*, the subscription per child in the voluntary schools during the 27 years 1876 to 1902 only fell below 6s. 6d. per child on three occasions; during the other years it varied from 6s. 6d. per child to 8s. 9d. per child. Taking the aggregate amount during the years from 1875, and notwithstanding the constant closing, and transfer of *Nonconformist* schools from the *voluntary* to the rate list, the subscriptions increased from £673,000 in 1875 to £876,000 in 1902. Besides this the voluntaryists also paid in one way or another for *maintenance* in the nine years from 1894 to 1902 from endowment, school pence, and other local sources nearly £4,000,000, in addition to building, repairing, and extending their schools, the cost of these items in the Board schools also being to a large extent borne by voluntaryists.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PASSING OF THE ACT OF 1902.

After the denunciation of the Education Act of 1902 and its Conservative authors during the last ten years, the reader will be simply amazed to hear how little Mr. Balfour did compared with the original proposals of the Liberal Government of 1870.

It was then proposed to build and maintain from the rates denominational schools, according to the discretion of the Local School Boards, and also to aid all the existing schools of each party.

Sir W. Harcourt laid down as the very cornerstone of Liberalism the doctrine that "the State is indifferent to all forms of religious belief and teaching."

"That one form of religious opinion has as full a right as another to share in the appropriation of any funds raised either by the State or under its authority."

"That the State is bound to provide a religious education for the minority as well as for the majority."

"That to refuse this is neither religious equality nor political justice."

"It is the Liberal doctrine that a tax levied upon the whole community must be enjoyed by the whole community."

Do Catholics ask for more than this?

To meet the objections of Nonconformists it was suggested that the assistance to *denominational* schools should be limited to *maintenance*, and that in the schools built from rates no denominational teaching should be given.

Parliament, however, thought fit to sanction a rate only for the so-called undenominational schools, and for 32 years we *obeyed* the law, though we protested against it and agitated for redress of the gross injustice under which we suffered.

The School Boards had the power, and used the power, of forcing up the cost of education, and the Education Department exacting the same standard of efficiency in the Board and voluntary schools, the latter had to compete with the rate-supported schools on very unequal terms, yet they beat them on their merits.

Notwithstanding the assistance given by the Acts of 1891 and 1897, as the cost continued to increase, and the policy of doles proved only a temporary expedient, in 1902 Mr. Balfour decided to give permanent help to the voluntary schools, and in such a form that, like the expenditure, it would increase in proportion as time went on.

He did not as he might, and in strict justice *should*, have put the entire cost of building and maintenance on the rates. He did not follow the example of the Liberal and Nonconformist parties, and do all in his power to crush out the rival system. He simply placed upon the rates the cost of the working expenses of the schools, and at the same time put the responsibility for the cost and management

of the *secular* education upon the local authority, giving them the appointment of one-third of the managers, with the obligation to keep the voluntary schools as efficient as the Board schools, but reserving to the *foundation* managers the control of *religious teaching*.

By this arrangement the Councils had *full control of the expenditure in all schools, and could prevent any irregularity in the conduct of the voluntary schools*.

The Board schools were the property of the public, and were used only for *public* purposes. The denominational schools, of all kinds, were, in *addition to the use* as day schools, also used as Sunday schools, and for various Church purposes. The decision to put only the working expenses of the day school as a charge upon the public funds, besides being a measure of simple justice, was eminently wise, since it enabled the denominations to have the full use of the buildings for all other purposes, without any possibility of friction between the two authorities.

It effected also an enormous saving of rates, which would have been spent in the provision of school buildings, to replace them. This would have cost the country at least 50 millions at Board school scale of cost. The Board schools were left just as they were before the Act was passed, neither income nor privilege of any kind was diminished one iota. The only change *in policy* was that after paying to the Education Rate for 32 years, the denominationalists get back sufficient to pay for the working expenses of their schools; probably at the outside this would

amount to 3d. in the 1s. on the amount paid, so that we still pay 9d. to the Board schools over and above the amount we get back. What was done by the Act so far as Board schools were concerned was to make the rating authority the spending authority. Before the Act of 1902 a Nonconformist majority on a School Board might spend as much as it liked upon building schools, and in many cases upon some plausible pretext or other they put up schools that were quite unnecessary, but they were built for the purpose of stopping any future extension of voluntary schools.

The Act of 1902 abolished the *School Boards*, but put the *Board schools* into an even better position than before, and placed them under the control of the authority directly responsible for raising the money for their support. Some years ago the school Board exceeded their powers by providing for other (Cockerton judgment) than elementary education, and a judicial decision showed that the members were liable to be made responsible for the payment of illegal expenditure. A special Act was passed by the Conservatives, who were supposed to be hostile to Board schools, and they were exempt, also legalising both the expenditure and the schools.

But certain forms of higher education and the technical schools had to be paid for by other sources of income, and in the larger towns we had elementary education under the Boards and higher and technical education under the Councils, and a good deal of overlapping was the inevitable result. The Act of 1902 did away with the School Boards, and placed all kinds of education under the Council, a plan that all

educationists admit has been attended with the greatest success.

The Board schools continued as before, only rather better, as Council schools.

Yet the Nonconformists told the people that the Board school *system* had been destroyed and the people's schools taken away.

A great deal of the apparent increase of expenditure under the new Education Committees was due to the fact that for the first time the *whole of the cost of education was shown in the one amount*, and this, added to the normal annual increase in the expenses of the Board schools, made it appear that the new arrangement would be much more expensive than the old.

One of our poets wrote,

"Hell knows no fury like a woman scorned,"
but that man didn't live in 1902.

No sooner did they announce their intention to place the maintenance of all schools upon the rates than a flood of calumny and misrepresentation was poured out from Liberal and Nonconformist Press, platform, and particularly the pulpit. No charge was too outrageous to bring against the Government and the denominational schools, and as one who took a full share in the Press discussion the writer can answer for the malignity of many of the statements.

Truth and justice were utterly cast to the winds by ministers of the Gospel, and a campaign of the most gross lying and calumny was initiated that greatly aided the Liberal triumph in the Parliament of 1906.

The truth was altogether suppressed, and some at least of the leaders of the campaign were grossly ignorant of the proposals of the Bill. Throughout the length and breadth of the land the people were told that they were to be compelled to pay for the teaching of Romanism. Public money was to be spent on sectarian schools, given into the hands of the priests, etc., and the most inflammatory language was used to stir up their prejudices.

The people were altogether unacquainted with the principles and practice in educational matters, and they naturally took the word of their political and religious leaders, who gave them to understand that Catholic and Church schools were entirely supported out of the rates, to which their supporters contributed nothing at all.

Every possible attempt to rouse religious bigotry was resorted to, and neither position, education, nor natural intelligence appeared to have the least check on prejudice and passion. A Manchester Congregational minister posted up in his garden that "he was being persecuted because he refused to pay for the teaching of Popery." He is now a Liberal M.P. Another—a solicitor—who was chairman of the Watch Committee, resigned that position to become president on the Passive Resistance League.

I interviewed him on his action, and asked him to reconsider his decision. His reply was to draw my attention to the news being cried out in the streets—it was too late.

Asked for his reasons, he said that the Bill compelled him to pay for sectarian teaching; that if his

daughter wished to become a teacher she must attend a Church school and be confirmed as a member of the Church of England.

I pointed out to him that, on the contrary, for the first time the Bill gave him the right to have his child trained as a teacher in any school, and that under no circumstances could he possibly have to pay anything for Church or Catholic teaching, because the Nonconformist Board schools would take up much more than the total Nonconformist contribution to the rates. Our position under 1870 was explained, and he admitted that if it were correctly described *we* had a very great grievance.

But he finished the conversation by turning round to me and saying: "But you know, Mr. Thompson, *I don't profess to understand the question.*"

All the same, he became president of a League to oppose the measure which he *didn't profess* to understand!

Another of the same profession, a prominent passive resister, admitted that Catholics suffered serious disability, but he said "it was not *the business of Liberals to remove that disability*; it was our own look-out."

I will conclude this chapter with a couple of quotations from a report of the second-reading speeches (Tablet, May 17th, 1902):—

Mr. Asquith: "The Act of 1870 was a compromise, but on the whole it has worked fairly well. It was the duty of the Government in such a case of delicate equilibrium, which could easily be disturbed, to consult both sides, but not as they have

done, leave one side out and accept almost 'verbatim et literatim' every suggestion made by the other side. In my judgment denominational schools must be helped, not because subscribers have a grievance, but because the schools themselves are inefficient. It is from a purely educational point of view that I gladly acquiesce in any additional contribution which is needed."

In the same speech he had said :—

"I admit, as a practical man, that denominational schools are an indispensable part of an educational system. You cannot get rid of them because you cannot find any practical substitute for them. Three millions of children are being educated in them at present. Whether the object be to maintain the denominational system out of pure zeal for the parents, or, as I more incline to suspect, the more cogent desire of the parents to avoid the imposition of a compulsory rate, there can be no doubt that these schools are popularly supported. The question is: What is the right way to deal with them?

This argument about voluntary schools being popularly supported to avoid a compulsory rate is completely demolished by the fact that it was in the large towns where there was already a compulsory rate, and where the parents could at any time have relieved themselves of the voluntary subscription and at the same time obtained for their children better educational and material advantages, that the voluntary schools were most strenuously supported.

Can it be seriously maintained, as Mr. Asquith

here argues, that in the 56 large towns having efficient Board schools, given on pages 12 to 14 of the Return for 1901-2, and, of course, a school rate paid by every parent, that the parents of over a million children should forego the advantages of the rate they actually paid, and, in addition, provide a total of something like 10s. per child—that is, more than £600,000 a year just for the sake of saving the rates?

Is it not much more natural and in accordance with common sense to suppose that they were willing to forego the benefits of the rate, and all the *material* advantages their children could derive from attendance at the Board schools, to get the kind of religious teaching they desired for their children. Is it conceivable that the parents of so many children would deprive them of these advantages and spend the money necessary for the upkeep of nearly 2,000 voluntary schools in these towns for the purpose of avoiding a compulsory rate, as Mr. Asquith says, when the compulsory rate was already being paid?

On the same occasion Mr. Balfour spoke as follows :

“Why is the Bill opposed? It is simply on account of the religious difficulty. It is the political forces of the Nonconformists who have driven hon. gentlemen into the Lobby against the Bill, and not their convictions as to its inefficacy as an educative measure.”

Sir W. Harcourt interjected, “That is not a proper thing to say,” Mr. Balfour.

“It is a perfectly proper thing to say. I think the House will do me the honour to say that I am the last man to make light of anything that is

regarded in conscience as objectionable by any human being, but after all, in the name of conscience—and rightly in the name of conscience—many unwise things have been done in the course of human history.

“When I am told, not in this House, but in correspondence which has reached enormous proportions during the last few days, that this is an insult to Nonconformists, and cruel to them, and interferes with religious liberty, I really wonder whether my correspondents have lost all sense of the use and proportion of language. In what way does it interfere with conscience? I am told that it is because rates are applied to denominational education. Everybody knows that rates are so applied north of the Tweed. I can hardly believe that the Presbyterianism of Scotland feels no twinges of conscience when rates are applied to (denominational) education in that county, but suddenly has twinges of conscience when it crosses over into Northumberland.

“Everybody knows that rates are applied to denominational schools (in Scotland). Everybody knows that the School Boards themselves so apply the rates in the case of the Jews. Everybody knows that under the Technical Instruction Acts denominational schools have been assisted out of the rates. Is it really possible to say that a system of that kind, acquiesced in by Nonconformists, can be a matter of conscience when it exists already? It cannot be utterly and totally wrong when we remember that the grievances from

which Nonconformists suffer are largely removed by this Bill. The Nonconformists want slowly to starve voluntary schools. That does not, and cannot, conduce either to Christian charity or to the education of the children. Voluntary schools are here and must remain. The commonsense of our people on the illogical buttress of the Cowper-Temple clause will found a system not only secular, but religious, which will be suitable to the great mass of the people. The difficulties from which we suffer are in this House. They are not difficulties in the parish or the school, and if only the professional politician will allow these things to rest I am confident that, not only as regards secondary but primary education, this Bill will work for peace, sound education, religious harmony, and religious education."

I have quoted Mr. Balfour at length for two reasons. First of all, Catholics have never given him the credit due to him for the great benefits he conferred upon our schools, and very few Catholics have had the opportunity of reading his defence of our schools.

In the second place, the speech, as a whole, is not only perfectly true, but it is an admirable summary of the whole question as applied to Nonconformists.

From a careful study of the debates of 1870 and 1876, of Liberal comments on the Acts of 1897, and a thorough acquaintance with the controversy for the last thirty years, including the proceedings of 1902 and 1906-8, I think it can be said with perfect truth that not once during the forty years has the Noncon-

formist body acted from a purely educational motive and from a desire to give to the whole of the children any advantage without some condition that militated against justice and equality.

Occasionally, as when the *British Weekly* admitted on December 10th, 1908, "that all forms of religious teaching must be put upon the same footing," and paid for equally out of the rates or equally banished from the schools, we get gleams of sanity, but they are very transient. Mr. Balfour's description applies only too well to their policy, as a whole, and all the time.

CHAPTER VII.

“SINGLE SCHOOL DISTRICTS”: AN UNKNOWN QUANTITY.

Largely a “Paper” Grievance: A “Self-made Disability.”

What is a single school area? No official definition has ever been given, and they are largely an unknown quantity and grossly misrepresented.

The list of such districts issued in 1908 is certainly a return of parishes containing only one school, but the man in the street understands it to be a list of districts where *the Nonconformist parent has no choice of school*. That is just what it is not.

There are many parishes in the country with only one school where the parent has ample choice in adjacent parishes, whilst there are many parishes with any number of schools of one type where certain parents have no choice at all.

The definition which I suggested, and which was taken as the basis of the discussion at the Manchester conference in 1908, was a district where any parent had not an alternative school within a given radius, irrespective of the number of schools of the same kind in the district. This is the only practical definition of the term.

This is the part of the question that is least understood. Probably no one knows all about them. There are three kinds of single school districts, but the Nonconformists only tell us of one, and that one is *not* created by the Act of 1902.

The number varies with the enthusiasm of the narrator, never less than 7,000 or 8,000, and it has been placed as high as 13,000. There were actually in 1898 nearly 8,000, divided as follows: With the Church school only, 5,600; with Nonconformist Denominational school, 520; with Catholic school, 37; and with Nonconformist Council school only, 1,326.

It is, however, a great mistake to suppose that all the children were compelled to attend these schools because there was no other. In many cases they were single school districts only technically, *other schools being available*.

In an article published in 1906 I suggested a fairer definition, and took the districts with only *one kind* of school, though there might be more than one school of the same kind; for example, in one parish, Ystradyfodwg, in Glamorgan, there are 32 Council schools, but no Church school, so that for Churchmen that is a single school district.

Since the Liberals came into power in 1906 they have altered the returns, rearranging them in such a way that it is impossible to compare the lists of schools with those of an earlier date, and I notice one or two places in their return of “single school districts” which were formerly and properly grouped as part of a borough or town.

The number of such districts decreases yearly, and from personal investigation into fourteen places where the alleged grievance is worst I find that it is greatly exaggerated.

The favourite platform instance of this kind of

Nonconformist grievance is related by Lord Sheffield, who tells his audience that in the parish of Anderton, near Chorley, there is only a Roman Catholic school, and all the Protestant children are forced into this Catholic school under the Act of 1902.

Now for the truth obtained from the vicar of Adlington, the next parish.

A few yards from the Catholic school, but in the next parish, there is a Church school, and some few hundred yards away, there is a Congregational school.

Some time ago we heard a great deal of a poor little Welsh boy who was forced into a Church school because there was no other. If he had wished to enter the teaching profession he must be confirmed as a Churchman, and other harrowing details. That poor little boy was Mr. Lloyd George. Unfortunately for the romantic story and its embellishments, the vicar of the parish writes that this poor little boy, on his way to the "only" school, which was a Church school, had to pass the Board school at Criccieth. So much for injustice No. 2. A third case, Osbaldeston, in Lancashire, only technically a single school parish, has other schools quite near. Another instance was given in the *Liberator* a few months ago. A Baptist minister "in the West of England" had to send his child to the Church school, the "only one in the parish." After several ineffectual attempts to drag down the religious teaching to his own level "he sent the child to a neighbouring Council school."

A personal friend complained that he had to attend a Church school, the only one, but admitted that they

had three Nonconformist school buildings which it did not suit them to open as day schools.

In another case mentioned in the *Manchester Guardian* I wrote to the resident Congregational minister for particulars, "only" a Church school, attendance about 140. They had two Nonconformist Sunday schools and about 70 children, but here again they preferred to sponge on the Church rather than go to the trouble of managing their own schools, as they might have done at any time; and they call this an injustice inflicted by the Act of 1902!

Still another of these parishes "without a choice of school" is Heyside, near Oldham. Upon inquiry from the vicar I find that there is within easy reach a Catholic school at Lees, and that there are Council schools and other Church schools quite near. There must be a large number of parishes similarly situated amongst the 5,600 Church school areas. During the debate on this question in March, 1912, the *Catholic Herald* published some articles dealing with the 27 Catholic schools which Irish Nationalists were willing to sacrifice under the Bill introduced by Sir G. C. Marks.

One school was held up as a type of the lot, Wycliffe, in the North Riding of Yorkshire. It was disparaged in every possible way, and the facts were distorted to justify the support given to the Bill by the Nationalist Party.

It was said that only a small number of the children were Catholics and that the Protestant minister gave the religious teaching every morning; that if this was the kind of "Catholic" school we

were trying to defend and keep we were better off without them.

Now for the facts. Some years ago there was a Catholic *certified efficient* school. That is, a school receiving no Government grant, but maintained by private liberality, which was sanctioned as fulfilling the necessary conditions as to education and attendance under the Acts.

The schoolhouse was condemned, and since the number of Catholic children was too small to justify a new Catholic school for them alone, by arrangement with the Anglican rector *and with the consent of the bishop of the diocese*, a new Catholic school was opened under Catholic management, and with two Catholic teachers, who give Catholic teaching to the Catholic children as is done in all Catholic schools.

The one thing unusual about the arrangement, and I commend it to those who are anxious to see a real and fair settlement of an unavoidable difficulty, is that the majority of the children, being Protestants, the Protestant rector takes them all into a *separate room* and gives them Protestant religious teaching, whilst the Catholic teachers are attending to the spiritual wants of our own children. There we have a *practical, common-sense solution of the difficulty* that satisfies everybody and meets the justice of any possible circumstances in single school areas; therefore the solution is *all round right of entry* for small numbers of children, and a special teacher where the numbers allow it to be done, such teacher to give religious teaching to the minority. The presence of such a teacher, e.g., a Nonconformist in a Church

school or a Church or Catholic teacher in a Council school would also do much to prevent any attempt to deal unjustly with those children, such as evasion of the conscience clause, etc.

Only in one case out of 14 that I investigated did I find that there was only a Church school possible within a radius of several miles.

Of the remainder three were not single school districts at all; in two there were alternative schools easily accessible; in the others Nonconformists had school buildings, which they could have opened on the same conditions as Catholics and Churchmen, and with far less opposition than we meet from their party. Of course, it does not suit the Nonconformists to disclose all the truth about these areas.

It was to meet a case depending upon facts cooked and manipulated in this manner that Mr. Birrell brought in his iniquitous Bill of 1906, which swept out of existence every Catholic school, and every Church school, which compelled the poorest Catholic or Churchman to pay rates for educating the child of his wealthier Nonconformist neighbour, and which also prevented the Catholic or Churchman getting “one single penny of either rates or taxes” (Mr. Birrell’s own words) unless he risked his children’s faith by sending them to a Council school.

Just before he brought in his Bill of 1906 Mr. Birrell gave the number of districts where Nonconformists were compelled to use Church schools as 10,000, nearly double the number which appears even on paper. He had nothing to say of the corresponding areas where Catholics and Churchmen were com-

pelled to use hostile schools, except that "minorities must suffer"; but it is *only denominational minorities* that are to suffer—*his creed is that the Methodist minority must rule.*

It is alleged, and far too readily admitted, that it is a grievance for Nonconformist children to be compelled to attend a Church school. Is it a grievance at all? It is not, since the Act treats them in one district just as it treats the Catholic and the Churchman in the others. As Mr. Balfour said in 1902, "it is certainly a grievance *if they are compelled to attend the Church of England religious teaching,*" but they have the protection of the conscience clause, which they consider adequate for the Catholic and Church child similarly situated in their schools."

If any section of the community is prevented from exercising its just rights, if it is oppressed or persecuted by another wealthier or more powerful, or if the law discriminates unjustly against it, it has a grievance. But no such conditions obtain in the case of Nonconformists. That they have wealth in abundance is proved by the millions of guineas raised as centenary funds and raised for special purposes still more recently, *e.g.* the £250,000, by the Baptists.

They live under the same conditions, and it is only the will to provide accommodation for their own children that is lacking. They have exactly the same freedom as other people to build or open schools. Where, then, is the grievance?

We have already seen that there are not 8,000 such districts in the country.

The year 1898 is eminently favourable to the Nonconformist position as a basis of calculation. The number of these districts decreases yearly, and it was about two years later we heard so much about them.

I have gone through the Government return for that year, and taking the definition as "an area containing only one kind of school," to simplify the matter as between Churchmen and Nonconformists, have tabulated the districts where (on paper) each has not a choice of schools, for that is the real difficulty. I have left out the Roman Catholic schools, to which they both object. A district with a Church school and a Catholic school is reckoned as a Church "single school" district, and a district with a Board school and a Catholic school is reckoned as a Board single school district.

All schools not marked as to denomination are assumed to be Church schools, with the exception of colliery or ironworks' schools, which, if not marked, are ignored altogether. This gives all the advantage to Nonconformists.

First of all, then, I find 6,633 districts in which there are 7,387 Church schools, but no Board or Nonconformist school. These 7,387 schools have an average attendance of 663,869 children. I find, also, 1,796 districts in which there are 2,494 Board schools, but no Church school, having an average attendance of 378,795 children. There are also marked 140 districts with 157 Nonconformist or Unsectarian schools, but no Church school. These have an average attendance of 17,837 children (much higher than other schools).

There were, however, in 1898, not 140, but 520, of such districts, so that to get accurate figures we must deduct 380 from the Church list, leaving the number of Church schools as 7,007, with 620,000 children, and increase the Nonconformists to 520 schools and 61,000 children. Up to 1902 the Church did not get a penny of the 100 millions spent from the rates. Under the Act of 1902 she got from the rates the difference between the grant and the cost of maintaining the school, which for 1898 meant raising as subscriptions the sum of £908,000.

But Nonconformists got the whole of the 100 millions for Board schools, in which their teaching is given, and they get more under the Act of 1902. That Act does not take away a single penny from the Board schools, but leaves them as they were before in everything but name. For 1898 alone they got from the rates *for maintenance* £2,470,000, the total rate being £5,276,000.

Putting the cost of the Board schools at that time as only twice that of the Church schools (it was nearly four times as much), we find that in single school districts only, Nonconformists received under the Act of 1902 much more for their 379,000 children in Board schools than the Church got for the 620,000 children in Church schools.

The *financial* burden, then, is not a Nonconformist but a Church and Catholic grievance.

To the above figures we must add maintenance for the 61,000 children in Nonconformist and Unsectarian schools, which was paid out of the rates in the same proportion as to Church schools, and we find

that Nonconformists got very much the best of the bargain even under the “ unjust ” Act of 1902. Yet they say they have a *financial* grievance.

They also allege that the religious grievance presses more hardly upon them in these districts; that not only have they to pay for the sectarian teaching in which they don’t believe, but that they have to send their children to these schools.

We have already seen that they don’t pay for the Church and Catholic teaching, as they allege.

It is very doubtful if there is a single educational area where the schools satisfying the Nonconformist demand for religious teaching do not cost much more than the whole of their contribution; but if we take into account the provision and repair of the Church and Catholic school buildings, and allow an annual amount, as is usually done in such cases, their argument fails altogether.

But assuming, for the sake of argument, that their contention is true in some districts, it is much more than counterbalanced by the rates paid by Churchmen and Catholics where *we* have no choice of schools.

Now as to the religious “ grievance.” If they were willing to concede the same rights to other people we might have some sympathy with them. But their whole policy and procedure has been devoted to the object of depriving others of this right which they are so anxious to enjoy themselves that no one acquainted with the facts can have the least sympathy with their complaint.

The cases mentioned earlier in this chapter prove

that the "grievance" is much exaggerated and that it is largely self-made.

Further, they have no hesitation in imposing this very "grievance" upon Catholics, and whenever they have the power they have deprived all others of the right of religious teaching demanded by the parents.

They point to the conscience clause, and say that it is sufficient protection for *us*, whilst they deny that it is sufficient for *them*.

With all the desire possible to treat them justly and fairly we can do no more.

I have heard of many instances where they have had the option of taking their own children and giving them religious instruction in Church schools by their own teachers during the time set apart for it, but they have refused it. Yet their only remedy for Catholics, and all others, under every settlement they have proposed is: "Teach your religion at your own cost, but not in the public schools."

It is impossible to say in how many of these districts the few Nonconformists are compelled to use the Church schools. It is quite certain that they are a minority, and they cannot expect the majority of the people of the particular area to voluntarily give up Church schools when their teachings are so strictly barred out of the public schools wherever Nonconformists form a majority of the people.

To compel the transfer of voluntary schools to the local authority, and to supplant the teaching of the majority by the Bible reading of the minority, would be religious persecution of the worst type. Yet this

is what was proposed by the Bill introduced into the House in March, 1912.

Mr. Pease is not likely to underestimate the existing grievance; I tried to be absolutely impartial in the estimate of 1898, and I also left out all the Catholic children. He included these *on the same basis of comparison*, and the total grievance is materially less than it was 14 years ago, according to his figures of March, 1912.

Had the Nonconformists been as anxious to supply the educational needs of their own children as they are to get their religious teaching paid for out of the rates it would have disappeared altogether.

Though no attempt has ever been made to allow the voluntary minority to have right of entry into Council schools where Nonconformists rule, many such offers have been made by the managers of Church schools. I have been told by several managers and trustees that the offer has been made and rejected. But in the debate in March Mr. Hoare quoted evidence to show that in the diocese of Wakefield Churchmen had made arrangements for the instruction of Nonconformist children in Church schools, in some cases going so far as to provide Nonconformist teachers.

The report quoted concludes:—

“ In the borough of Morley there is no provision for older children except in the Council schools. It thus happens that, while in Church schools provided by Churchmen for Church teaching provision may be, and is sometimes, made to meet the needs of Nonconformist parents, *in Council schools pro-*

vided by the funds of the whole community, Churchmen included, alternative teaching such as is desired cannot be procured."

It was stated in the Luddendenfoot inquiry (1913) that the law does not permit separate denominational teaching to be given in Council schools.

The real and only just solution in all districts where there is no choice of school is to give right of entry into all schools for a small number of children, and wherever the number of children would justify it, to appoint a special teacher (or exchange teachers in the same area), and let such teacher take the minority of children during religious instruction.

But that is the very thing Nonconformists won't listen to. They demand everything for themselves, but concede nothing to us.

CHAPTER VIII.

SINGLE SCHOOL AREAS (*Continued*).

Not only was this single school grievance in existence under the Liberal Act of 1870, it is entirely their own fault that it was not removed by the Act of 1902.

The 1,796 districts where the Churchman had no choice of school contained, as we have seen, 2,500 Board schools entirely provided out of the rates; that is, not one penny was contributed by the Nonconformists voluntarily, whilst the Churchmen and Catholics had to build and maintain schools they did not want but were compelled to use.

These schools continued just as before under the Act of 1902, the Nonconformist monopoly being in no way affected.

What the Act did as regards the *voluntary* schools in "single school" districts was to put the cost of maintenance on the rates. But it put *Nonconformist denominational schools* on the rates as well as the Church school and the Catholic school. It gave the 520 Wesleyan and British schools exactly the same rights as the 37 Catholic or the Church schools. If the Nonconformist head teacher was shut out of our schools the Churchman and Catholic was equally shut out of theirs. The Act treated all denominations alike. For political reasons they chose to give up their schools and get them entirely maintained from

rates, and they must take the consequences of their actions. On July 23rd, 1902, an amendment was proposed to the Bill by which all schools in single school areas were confiscated to the Councils, as Sir G. C. Marks proposed in March, 1912. Mr. Dillon, on behalf of the Nationalists, declared that they could not support the proposal, "*since in removing one grievance it would create a greater grievance for Churchmen,*" and the proposal was defeated. Mr. Balfour admitted the grievance *if Church teaching was being given to Nonconformist children*, and offered to give them statutory protection under the Act, but he very properly said that it must be accompanied by similar rights for Catholics and Churchmen in other districts. His proposal was received in silence, and he said that they clearly desired to confiscate the Church schools and give nothing in return, so matters must remain as they were.

On the 25th Mr. Dillon moved his famous amendment—the suggestion of the Radical Bishop of Hereford—to the effect that in all such districts two managers should be appointed by the local authority, two by the trustees, and the other two should be elected by the ratepayers. This would have caused endless friction, would inevitably have resulted in the confiscation of a large number of Church schools, and was the thin end of the wedge to bring about universal Council schools. It was rejected, and the Irish members left the House and took no further part in the discussions on the Bill. This proves, at any rate, that the charge of leaving the grievance untouched in the Act of 1902 recoils on those who

prevented that Bill being made a perfect educational settlement by removing every grievance of every section of the people.

We will now turn to the other school districts, and we shall find a very interesting story that Nonconformists do not talk about.

I have gone through the first 24 English counties in this same return, and also the Welsh counties, and in 181 boroughs in the administrative counties (not county boroughs; they will come later) I find 279 Church schools with 53,000 children; in the same 181 boroughs there are 672 Board schools, with 190,000 children.

Here, in addition to paying for their own schools, the Churchmen are paying a large share of the cost of the 672 Board schools where the children of their Nonconformist neighbours are getting their religious principles taught at the public cost. Again, supposing that the cost of the Board schools is only twice that of the Church schools, we find that in these 181 boroughs, although all pay alike, the Nonconformists get back from the rates about seven times as much as the Churchmen.

Taking the county boroughs, we find still the same tale. The statistical return for 1901-2 gives 67 county boroughs in England and Wales. These contain 1,314 Church schools, 235 Nonconformist denominational schools, 388 Catholic schools, and 1,578 Board schools. The total number on the registers of the voluntary schools was 963,113, but deducting the proportion in the Nonconformist schools reduced it to about 843,000. The number on

the registers in the Board schools was 1,490,529, and each child cost the ratepayers in 1902 the sum of 29s. 5d., making a total of £3,472,000. In these boroughs, therefore, Churchmen and Catholics supported 1,702 schools with 843,000 children without a penny from the rates, though they paid out of their own pockets 8s. 4d. for each child, a total of £700,000, and helped to pay for the 1,578 Board schools getting all the huge rate. Under the Act of 1902, whilst paying the same rate, the Nonconformists got nearly five times as much as the Churchmen, and have no subscription to make up such as he must pay. Yet we are told that they have a financial grievance, and are compelled to pay for our "sectarian teaching."

With all their enormous wealth and numbers, Nonconformists as such, out of 3,127 schools in these areas, supported out of their own pockets the large proportion of 235. What a tremendous sacrifice they made in the cause of education. Compare this with the Catholic body, who in the same districts supported 388 schools without a penny from the rates.

One would naturally suppose that the denominations who have spent so much money and done so much for education would get some reward for their labours.

They have not only been encouraged, but have been compelled by the various Governments to spend large sums of money in improving and extending their schools to meet the requirements of the Education Department. Mr. Birrell, by a stroke of the pen, proposed to hand over all these schools to the people,

who had done practically nothing for their own children, and had even refused to provide for them at all whenever they could foist their duty upon the community.

The Education Bill of 1906 was based upon an imaginary grievance to Nonconformists. This was admitted by Mr. Birrell himself in introducing the measure.

The underlying principle of his proposals was that the Nonconformist parent has a right to have schools built and maintained and teachers paid to give his children such education, religious and secular, as commends itself to him. At the same time this right is denied to the Catholic and Churchman who has done his duty in educating his children and building and maintaining schools for the purpose. For the future the only right of the Catholic and the Churchman was to pay for the privileges of the man who is a bitter enemy of both, and who is trying, as far as he is able, to destroy the distinctive Christianity of both.

These figures, which cannot be disputed, prove very clearly that it is not the Nonconformist who has a grievance, but the Churchman and the Catholic.

But the Catholic has a much greater grievance than the Churchman. Wherever there is a Catholic he has to pay rates and taxes to support educational systems hostile to his faith, and at the same time must send his children into non-Catholic and often anti-Catholic schools. In 1,796 districts the Churchman had to pay to support a Nonconformist system and entrust his children to it, because they have captured the Boards, and closed all the Church schools

they could. In 6,000 districts Nonconformists have to send their children into Church schools because they refuse to provide their own schools, and up to now they have not been able to force Board schools on the districts.

But the Catholic is compelled to pay for the Board schools, and in 9,000 districts must send his children into non-Catholic schools, because he is too poor to build his own and sometimes, even when he has built the school, is prevented from getting a grant for it, by the bigotry of the Nonconformists. Wherever he has the means he puts up first the school chapel for the education of his children in the faith, then, when he is able, he builds the church itself. In some of the more scattered dioceses we find 868 churches in 30 counties. In these same 30 counties there are only 401 Catholic schools, 100 of these being in the county boroughs, so that in 467 parishes, when we are sufficiently numerous to support churches and priests, we have no Catholic school. But every Catholic householder has to pay his rates and taxes to support Protestant schools that are only too often the means of destroying the faith of his children.

We don't complain of the present state of affairs; we recognise that it is our duty to provide for the education of our own children, and all we ask is that when we have built our schools the State shall put us on an equality with the others and give us the grants earned by our children, and not persecute us for our faith.

In his speech on the second reading of his Bill (March 8, 1912) Sir G. C. Marks said that the griev-

ance was not diminishing but probably increasing. Here is his statement, which shows the amount of his knowledge of the subject:—

“The right hon. gentleman who was then Prime Minister stated that the Act of 1902 did not touch the single school grievance. It has continued from that day to this to be a grievance, and has not got less, but probably more.”—Authorised Report, p. 688.

On p. 693 he says that he recognises the Church grievance in the single school areas. “I recognise that where there is only a Council school, and all the children are compelled to attend that school, those of you who think devoutly and seriously that children ought every day to have some dogmatic teaching are under a disadvantage. I would be prepared personally in connection with areas where there is only one school to recognise *your* grievance provided you recognised *mine*.”

This is remarkable as the first admission I have ever seen that we have a grievance where there is only a Council school, but in spite of this candid declaration there was no attempt, either in the Bill or during the debate following, to do anything at all to remedy the grievance of the Catholic and Church parents in those areas, and the official organ of the party denies that we have such a grievance. Moreover, Mr. Balfour not only recognised the grievance in 1902; he recognised that it was in some cases impossible to have more than one school, but he made the offer on two occasions *to remove the grievance of the Nonconformists in Church areas if a corresponding right was given to the Catholics and Churchmen*

in Board and Nonconformist areas. But the grievance is much greater and more real for the Catholic and the Churchman than for the Nonconformist, both as regards conscience and finance. The religious position is fundamentally different. We demand definite dogmatic instruction as part and parcel of the child's education. This we cannot get in the Council schools, and if we withdraw our children from the Cowper-Temple teaching *they get only a secular education.* On the other hand, if a Nonconformist child is withdrawn from the teaching in the Church or Catholic school, he may, if his parents wish, get what his denomination considers an "adequate" amount of "Christian instruction" by being given a Bible to get up a lesson whilst the other children are engaged in their religious exercises. So much for the conscience grievance.

From a financial point of view the Catholic and the Churchman has to help to pay the *entire cost* of the Council school, in which his child is deprived altogether of that religious teaching which he considers necessary, whilst the Nonconformist has to pay only towards the cost of *maintenance* of the Catholic or Church school in which his child may get adequate religious teaching *under any circumstances* if it is desired by the parent.

Is the Nonconformist grievance diminishing? If it is the Church grievance is increasing. I found that in 1898, so far as we could estimate from the returns, in some 7,000 schools, 620,000 children had no choice but the Church school—that is, including the districts with a Catholic school but no Noncon-

formist school, *but not counting the attendance at Catholic schools.*

But Mr. Pease, the Minister of Education, tells us that whilst the "*Board*" *single school district had increased by 480, in March, 1912; there are only about 500,000 children affected in other districts, including the Catholics left out of my 1898 calculation.* So that in the ordinary course, by the extension of Council schools, in 14 years *the grievance has decreased by 120,000 children, plus the attendance at the Catholic schools, which makes the decrease still greater.*

CHAPTER IX.

THE RIGHT OF THE PARENT ON EDUCATION.

The right of the parent is the basis of the Catholic claim in education.

Put in its simplest form, it is that the Catholic parent has the right to give his child a Catholic education. It is the existence of this right of all parents, and only the existence of this right, that creates any religious difficulty. The State, having taken over the parents' duty of educating the child, the Catholic, and also the Church parent, demands that the State shall provide a religious education for *his* child on the same condition that it provides a Nonconformist education for his neighbour's, for the State does not ignore religious teaching altogether. Dr. Clifford, the acknowledged leader on the other side, (1) denies that the Catholic parent has any right to such treatment from the State, (2) alleges that the State has a prior claim to the parent, who has no right as such, but only as a citizen, and (3) that it is not the duty of the State to provide religious teaching at all.

The answer to this is threefold.

- (1) By every right, natural and divine, the child belongs to the parent. The family came before the State, which is simply a collection of families, and cannot supersede or override the rights of the family.
- (2) In law the parent may bring an action on behalf

of the child. In education the duty of the parent has been usurped by the State, which thus stands in the place of the parent, and is bound to fulfil *the whole* of the parent's duty, including that of providing religious instruction. The teacher employed by the State is the delegate of the parent and not of the State. (3) The State itself has from the beginning recognised this right of the parent, and *all educational legislation is based upon the admission of this right of the parent to control the religious education of the child.* The *Bill* of 1870 frankly admitted it, and gave effect to the rights of all upon exactly the same conditions, and therein lay its excellence. The *Act* of 1870 *also admitted this right, but gave it freely*, and at the entire cost of the State, *only to those who agreed with the Parliamentary majority of the day.* The right was grudgingly admitted in the case of all others, but obstacles of all kinds were placed in the way of its exercise. All other legislation has admitted it, *and the whole of the difficulty in education is caused by the efforts of politicians to restrict this admitted right to those of their own way of thinking and to hamper and impede its exercise on the part of others.*

Only a politician, and a politician run mad, would deny the existence of this right, which is so universally recognised.

The third answer is that the whole policy of the opponents of Catholic education is based upon the assertion of this right in their own case, and, if they possess it, the Catholic and Churchman must possess it equally. The United Free Church Council's claim

for a "Christian unsectarian" school "within easy reach of every family" is the assertion of this inalienable right in its most extreme form.

One cannot conceive any professing Christian denying the right of the parent.

But in opposition to parental right we have the "civic solution." What is the civic solution? It is one of the later developments of the controversy that puts the State in the place of the parent. It asserts that it is for the State and not for the parent or the individual to decide in all matters, including religious teaching. It says that since the teacher is paid by the community, like the postman, the lamp-lighter, and the tax collector, it belongs to the community to determine the nature and extent of his duties. To the unthinking reader this may sound, not merely plausible, but reasonable. He sees no reason why the teacher should not be appointed by the State just as all Civil servants are so appointed.

But, taking the question even on this level, there is one thing that separates the teaching profession from all others and prohibits any comparison with any other service at all.

All branches of the Civil service are concerned with the mutual relations and duties of the State and the individual in the *material* aspect in matters upon which there is no controversy as to rights, and deal only with our physical being, which may be subjected to the same conditions without any serious inconvenience or injustice.

The teacher, on the other hand, is an agent, and the only public agent concerned with the soul and

with the unformed character of each individual child.

Under existing conditions he is the channel which conveys the collective duties of the parent and the State to the child, and stands in a totally different relation from any Civil servant.

All Civil servants render only material services, and it is not impossible that many of these could be performed by a soulless automaton.

There is another difference. All these services are of an impersonal nature; they do not touch our personality. So far as we are concerned they are purely mechanical. Some day the lamplighter will be dispensed with; by the turning of a switch in the municipal office the whole district will be lighted. No matter how important our letters, we need only see the postman to give him his annual Christmas box. Our rates and taxes, which unfortunately we must pay, may be paid without the intervention of the collector.

A Zulu or a Hottentot could be trained to deliver our letters, a leper could light our street lamps, or an African witch doctor collect our taxes without affecting us in the least.

The teacher stands alone. He has access to a sphere from which the Civil servant of all kinds is rigidly shut out. He performs duties that could *not* by any possibility be performed by a machine. The service he renders is not in any sense civic, but essentially personal. He touches the personality or individuality of the child at every point.

The character of the postman doesn't matter a jot so long as our letters are properly delivered. As a

Civil servant he deals with all citizens and with all classes impartially and indiscriminately. The character of the teacher is everything. His service is personal; it is rendered immediately to the individual and only indirectly to the community. Civil servants are merely the medium by which communication is kept up between the citizen and the various departments of the State. The teacher is more than that to the child. He is the source, and at the same time the means of communicating knowledge, and only for convenience has the State been allowed to become his paymaster and the judge of his *educational* qualifications. He has knowledge and character which he imparts directly to the child. He has authority delegated to him by the parent and sanctioned by the State, with the force of the State law behind him in *disciplinary* matters. All this is true of the teacher and not true of the Civil servant even in the sphere of material communication, which is as far as the latter is able to go. The postman serves peer and peasant alike; the teacher in the branch we are discussing deals only with the poorer children. The peasant must have the same free choice of teacher as the peer. But if we take a step beyond such relation and come to the training of the mind and soul of the child we enter a domain where the mention of the State is mockery. And the strongest supporters of the "civic" ideal in education, and those who are most insistent that the teacher is a Civil servant, are the first to recognise the mockery in their own case. In the domain of conscience there is no room for the State or the Civil servant.

Education, even by the advocates of the so-called secular solution, must include a certain amount of religious teaching. In the very nature of things, also, religion must take its place, and cannot be left out. From the Christian point of view religion is the most important factor.

Religious teaching must be true or false, and it belongs neither to the State nor to any Civil servant to determine this, and though it is as universal and indispensable as light or water it cannot be delivered from a municipal manufactory and through a municipal service like these commodities. Light and water are natural necessities, and are supplied to all and used by all for the same purposes.

The religious and moral training of the child which is entrusted to the teacher is not comparable with any such service, no matter how essential that service may be.

It belongs to the parent to decide which this shall be, and he has every right, natural and divine, to choose the teacher and dictate the teaching, subject only to the Ten Commandments and the obligations of Christianity.

The next question is, What would satisfy the parental right? Is it possible to satisfy the right by anything short of our claim for "Catholic schools for Catholic children, under Catholic management and control, and equal financial treatment?" It is not. We are told that we must send our children to the common school to be brought up in an atmosphere of semi-rationalism, and then in the evenings and week-ends teach them our religion. That is not,

and, in the nature of things, cannot be enough. To make the suggestion is to admit a fundamental misconception of Christianity. It cannot be shut up into water-tight compartments or worked to a timetable like secular lessons. Education is not merely the imparting of knowledge, but the building up of character by example, precept, and surroundings. Religion is the essential factor in the formation of character, and must be ever present, and pervade and permeate the whole life of the child, in school and home. Under present conditions, and the far-reaching influence of the State, the separation and tyranny of the school system, and the withdrawal of religious teaching from the daily life and the beginning of the civic life of the child, would be fatal to religion in the adult.

There should be no need to labour this part of the case, and it may be dismissed as being typical of the weak arguments against Catholic educational rights. But to satisfy the objection we will take one precept of St. Paul as to the sanctification of the taking even of material food, by doing all things for the glory of God (I. Cor., 31). If such is the Apostle's advice as to bodily food, how much more important to see that all the food for the mind is directed to the sanctification of the soul of the child and the glory of the God who created and redeemed it?

Our claim is just, clear, and definite. What of the opposition? It is a jangle of contradictions and confusions. Mr. J. T. Macnamara, now a Government Minister, formerly schoolmaster and educational expert, wrote in 1903, in the *Fortnightly*

Review, that the Council schools "may now be called 'undenominational' schools." That is one view. Dr. Clifford, in the *Daily News*, asks: What is undenominationalism? What exactly does this mean? The Cowper-Temple arrangement is made with the view of excluding from the area of public education all sectarian formulæ. It blocks the way of the 'denominationalist' to the public funds. That is as certain as that two and two are four. But Mr. Hole wishes to shut out something else. What is it? "*Is it any and every use of the Bible? Is it the singing of the hymns of praise and inspiration of faith and love? Is it the Lord's Prayer and all prayers? Is it 'undenominationalism,' or the 'common or fundamental Christianity' supposed to be taught—I say supposed to be taught, for I have not yet met with one who could tell me what that 'undenominationalism' is or define the 'fundamental Christianity' 'common' to all the Churches. Certainly there is not a 'common Anglicanism,' and each Baptist may, by the very conditions of our existence, be left to determine for himself what is the common faith of the Baptist Church. Secularism does not exclude the Bible. I do not think we shall reach that end by prohibiting all use of the Bible in State teaching. Those—and they form the vast majority—who stand for the use of portions of the Bible suited to the capacity of a child, such use to be literary, historical, ethical, and spiritual, but never in any way theological or ecclesiastical. Sure as we are men, that is the pathway and the way the nation has to go.*"

So far the educational dictator whom the Govern-

ment are pledged to follow. Who is to say what is "suited to the capacity of the child"? The very limitation is the height of presumption. That there is a self-existent supreme creative power is a self-evident truth, but it is incomprehensible to the keenest human intellect, and the simple faith of the child is more sublime than all the dissertations on the existence of God.

The Incarnation is the very basis of our Christianity, but which of these learned Nonconformist divines is able to grasp the immensity of the truth better than the youngest child lisping the name of Jesus in our infant schools? Yet the London County Council and the British Parliament have the assurance to say what is and what is not within the capacity of the mind of an innocent child, as though the adult were better able to understand the mysteries of faith. The whole Nonconformist and anti-Catholic case is based upon similar artificial distinctions, evasions, and suppressions of the true facts. Their educational ideal, is universal Council schools giving a religious teaching that satisfies the Free Church demand. But they never frankly admit that they have these schools all over the land, and that in these schools their demand is satisfied. The country as a whole, and even the House of Commons, with the exception of a very few members, is ignorant of the extent to which Nonconformist principles are established and endowed, and even thrust down the throats of children, where they happen to be in a majority.

They first boast that they have no "creed," and then deny that their creed is taught in Council

schools. But this word "creed," like every other word in connection with the subject, is used in an artificial and misleading sense. They have both a creed and a tradition, and the creed and tradition of leading Nonconformist sects is taught in nearly every Council school in England and Wales.

Their creed is the Bible only, their tradition is the denial of any authoritative interpretation, and both these are constantly "taught, used, and practised" in the Council schools, thus denying the Catholic faith. But by a quibble on the word "creed" they deny the truth and impose on the people of the country.

Mr. J. Allanson Picton, late M.P., and a member of the London School Board, constantly asserted that the Council school teaching was Nonconformist teaching; and, replying to this charge in the *Manchester Guardian*, the late Rev. J. H. Hollowell, secretary of the Northern Counties League, admitted that the religious teaching given in Council schools was exactly what the Nonconformist child heard on Sundays in the home, the Sunday school, and pulpit, but he argued that this was so because it was "Christian, and not because it was Nonconformist."

That the religious teaching in the Council schools is Nonconformist may easily be proved. It is admittedly neither Catholic nor Anglican, so these are put out of court.

Dr. Clifford has demolished the fallacy that there is a common basis of Christianity, which may be taught to all children in the public schools without injustice, as is so often asserted. There is not even a common basis of Protestantism, as most people would say, at any rate, in a religious sense.

In some respects the Church of England is much nearer to the Catholic Church than to the Nonconformist Churches. We know, of course, that there is no stability of doctrine in Protestantism, but we must take the official formulary, in the case of the Church the Thirty-nine Articles. Looking at these, we find that the Anglican Church does teach the great truths of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Redemption, and the Resurrection, and claims to teach them by authority. It does not matter for our present purpose that we deny her authority, since it is believed by her adherents. What we have to do in the educational world is to see what are the claims of various sections, and gauge those claims by the standard of common justice. The Churchman has exactly the same right as the Catholic and the Nonconformist to have his religious convictions respected and safeguarded. We find, then, that in common with the Catholic Church, the Anglican in her formularies claims to teach the great fundamental truths of Christianity; she claims to teach them by authority, and she also claims in the Articles to have authority to decide controversies of faith, and to be the keeper and guardian of Holy Writ. Churchmen claim, and have the right to, an Anglican education for their children. Such is the Anglican claim, and it is as much opposed to Nonconformist principles as is the Catholic Church.

Their point of agreement with the Nonconformists is that the Scriptures contain the whole of the revelations of Jesus Christ, and that is the only real point, with the exception of the more political aspect of

opposition to Rome. The Nonconformist principle is the Bible only, with the denial of all authority in interpretation or teaching, and the fullest possible claim on the part of any individual to decide for himself what he must and must not believe.

The Nonconformist principle is the basis of all Council school teaching, and the fundamental principles of Nonconformity are embodied in Cowper-Temple teaching to the exclusion of all others.

We have quoted Dr. Clifford to the effect that exclusion is the note of Cowper-Templeism, and it is the exclusion of the distinctive teaching of the Catholic and Anglican Churches, leaving the Council no option but to give the lifeless and creedless teaching of the Free Churches, whose doctrines are chiefly negative, and who maintain the right of every man to take the Bible and judge for himself what he shall believe and what he shall reject.

CHAPTER X.

THE CHILD.

I have no doubt that some readers have been asking, "But what of the child; where does he come in?" So far as he is concerned in educational legislation he is little more than a grant-earning unit.

True, he is supposed to be protected from spiritual injury by a conscience clause, which our opponents consider quite sufficient for our children, but altogether inadequate to protect their interests, and here we have the secret of the whole trouble in the education question, inequality of treatment and unfair discrimination upon religious grounds.

The child is not considered as a human being, with a soul of his own, and with rights paramount to all other rights and interests.

Since the day upon which Mr. Forster moved the second reading of his Bill the child has been made to take a very insignificant place in education. That Bill, it should never be forgotten, gave to every British child his birthright to an adequate education, untrammelled by any conditions or disabilities upon religious or other grounds. The first and last considerations were the child and his welfare, and, as introduced, the measure put the child in his proper place in the scheme of education, and made all other matters secondary and subservient to his spiritual and temporal welfare.

The same opportunity was to be given to every child and upon exactly the same conditions, irrespective of all questions of creed or politics in any shape or form. This should be the ideal of all educational legislation. The teachers were intended to train the children, and, not as now, the children looked upon chiefly as a means of finding employment for teachers, who expect to lay down the conditions upon which they will condescend to work. Still less were they intended to be pawns by which the politicians could bid for votes to further his schemes for self-aggrandisement and the crushing of his political opponents.

In the Bill of 1870 the child was a human being, with a body and soul, and a mind that was to be trained and educated so as to give him the best possible chance of working out his moral and material salvation.

But with the first note of opposition came a change in the outlook, and he was thrust back amongst a mass of unimportant details. The first speech in the debate raised the question of creed, and proposed educational disability upon religious grounds, and it was moved that the Catholic and the Anglican child should not participate in the benefits of the Act, which were to be confined to those who would accept Nonconformist principles. Speaker after speaker followed, each one enlarging upon the various political and sectarian interests, and all desirous of thrusting down the throat of the poor little victim their particular nostrums for the settlement of the religious difficulty, which was created solely by their

own refusal to consider the child first of all, and allow all other matters to settle themselves.

It is obvious that all children have the same rights, and that in any attempt to interfere with these rights, or lay down conditions and impose restrictions of any kind, the child must be the first to suffer. But from the very beginning the plea was that if the child was treated impartially and equally, certain political interests would suffer, and, therefore, the benefits under the Act of 1870 were hedged round with all sorts of restrictions and conditions, that shut out the vast majority of the children of the country from any share or opportunity of educational advantage from the rates paid by their parents.

By their professed anxiety to free the schools from religious disabilities they fixed upon the children a religious test that has done incalculable harm to the country from the moral and religious point of view, and operated to obstruct and hinder national education. But just as the advocates of denominational schools have fought the battle of religious freedom as a whole, they have fought also for the emancipation of the child. The two are inseparable. From the beginning the Nonconformists tried, and unfortunately, succeeded in coupling with the best and widest opportunity for secular training the narrowest and most illogical system of religious teaching it was possible to create.

On the pretext of giving freedom to the child, they forced upon him the most far-reaching and insidious form of religious persecution that could be devised, and every conscientious parent had to choose between

the things that were Cæsar's and the things that were God's, and see his children deprived of rights that were freely given to those who were willing to accept the State creed.

This was by far the cruellest effect of the Act of 1870. The pecuniary sacrifices we had to make, and the constant and wearying efforts to keep our schools going and give a Catholic education to our children, were nothing compared with the knowledge that our children were being deprived of their rights because they were Catholics. For five years after the passing of the Act the poorest children were the greatest sufferers. If their parents chose to send them to the Board schools, and they were unable to pay, their school fees could be remitted by the School Board, but such provision was optional for children attending the voluntary schools until 1876. They were thrown upon the charity of the managers of the voluntary schools, and had to be admitted free. In 1876 the Conservatives passed an Act allowing the Boards of Guardians to pay their fees. Previous to this every free child reduced the revenue of the school, and helped to increase the fine for poverty, and since the equipment of the school and the cost of teachers, etc., had to be kept down to the lowest possible amount, the children were the real sufferers.

So through all the years up to 1902. The children who were the first to suffer were also the first to benefit by any additional aid to the schools, but it is impossible to estimate the harm that was done to the children of the country through the bigotry and intolerance of those politicians who punished them

for the faith and constancy of their parents. When the Act of 1902 was passed, and the law gave them equal rights with others, the persecution became even more bitter, and every punishment that petty spite could invent was put upon the children in certain districts.

By the action of the County Councils in Wales, in refusing to spend any part of the rates upon the voluntary schools, one bitter winter the children in the Catholic and Church schools were kept without fires, whilst the Board schools were warm and comfortable at the public cost.

This shows to what lengths the bigotry of the Non-conformists will carry them, for this policy was initiated by ministers, and received the approval and acclamation of their National Conference in 1905.

But the children who had the material advantages in the Board schools were, perhaps, the greatest sufferers in being deprived of that spiritual food which is the first necessity. They were not allowed to hear the great truths of Christianity. In some cases, under law-respecting School Boards, as in Birmingham, they were deprived altogether of religious teaching for years. In many places only the most perfunctory reading of the Bible was permitted, and all definite teaching was prohibited, and we see the result to-day in the general decrease of membership amongst Nonconformist churches and the enormous amount of Rationalism, Infidelity, and Socialism among the younger adult population of the country. Respect for the authority formed no part of their training; it was deliberately, and of set purpose, shut

out from whatever religious teaching was given to them. The whole basis of their moral training rested upon their individual private judgment, and all idea of authoritative religious and moral teaching was banished. There is no doubt that if all the people of the country could have had the same educational advantages given to their children, along with a definite and systematic religious teaching, the Board schools would have been a failure. It is well known that many parents prefer to send their children to Church schools, where they have the choice of Council schools, and a much larger number of Protestants send their children to Catholic schools because of our moral training than is generally supposed.

Quite recently the Archbishop of Canterbury issued a warning against the very common practice of Protestants sending their daughters to convent schools, not because the sisters made any attempt to proselytise, for it is generally admitted that they do not attempt any such thing, but because the moral training they received might, and in some cases did, predispose them to become converts in later life. This is not a new question. Many years ago a similar agitation was raised amongst the Methodists, and it is a tribute to the moral teaching of the Catholic Church that so many Protestant parents would rather run whatever risk there may be to the *faith* of their girls for the sake of the *moral* training which is admittedly so superior to any they can get in their own schools.

Nowadays we hear a very great deal about the

freedom of the teacher and the right of the ratepayer to control the religious teaching in the schools. Not all the teachers in the land, nor all the ratepayers combined, have the right to interfere with the soul of a single child. The soul of every child was created and redeemed by God, not for the sake of the teacher or the local education authority. The Catholic cry should be the right of the child and the control of the parent as the natural guardian of the child.

God has given that child to the parent, and the parent has the responsibility for training up that child, not for the State, but for God. Yet, singularly enough, it is the very man who denies the right of the State, or, indeed, of anybody at all, to come between himself and God, that shouts loudest for the right to come between the knowledge of God and the children in the schools of England.

Christ said, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not." The County Council says that they shall not go to Christ during the time they are at school.

They may have scraps and tags of Scripture given to them, but they must not have a definite knowledge of Jesus Christ.

The Manchester Education Committee have a kind of alphabetical acrostic of Scripture, but what kind of a knowledge of Christ can be obtained from a thing of this kind?

The Liverpool Committee hammer into the brain of the child from his first entry into the infant school to the day he leaves for work the petrified lie of the authorised version, John 5, 39, "Search the Scriptures."

In the Manchester acrostic we find: "Verily I say unto you, whatsoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein, and He took them up in His arms and blessed them."

But the authority that permits this text tells us that the Divine truths are beyond the capacity of a little child, and have determined that, so far as they can prevent it, no little child shall have the opportunity of hearing them. We have heard a very great deal of the conscience clause, which compels any school to admit children without regard to their creed, and prevents any distinction being made or any disadvantage being imposed on the ground that they belong to a different denomination. The conscience clause is in operation in all schools, and any child may be withdrawn from religious teaching without forfeiting any other benefits of the school.

The effect of this will be seen if we compare the number of children who were at various dates admitted or debarred the benefits of the Act of 1870 and given a share in the advantages accruing from the education rates. The vast majority were shut out by the religious test in the Cowper-Temple clause.

We have the authority of Mr. Birrell and many other Nonconformists for the statement that in the case of Nonconformist children it is of very little use, since the parents are afraid to claim its protection, and the child will rather be a sinner than be singular, as Mr. Birrell said.

But in the old Board and present Council schools the conscience clause is neutralised by the Cowper-Temple clause, limiting the religious teaching

strictly to Nonconformist principles. This clause virtually compels every child to receive the religious teaching given in the school as a condition of benefiting by the advantages given to the schools provided entirely out of the rates.

Owing to the fact that up to 1902 these schools had a monopoly of the rates, from the point of educational equipment, they are far in advance of the voluntary schools, and they were able to offer all kinds of bribes in the way of material and educational advantages (and also give prizes paid for out of the common purse), which were not available for the child in the voluntary school.

Such discrimination was, and still is, an injustice to every child, and would have been impossible in any system giving the first consideration to the child.

Our English system begins at the wrong end—the politician comes first and the child last. Our papers and magazines are full of articles making claims for anybody and everybody but the child.

The politician cannot agree that sectarian teaching shall be given in the school; the citizen will only consent to pay for that common religious teaching that happens to embody his particular brand of heresy. The teacher claims the right to dictate both to the parent and the child the kind of teaching he will give, and objects to being bound in any way in religious matters. All this only proves most conclusively the topsy-turvy nature of our educational system.

Catholics put the child first, and must put the child first, and in any rational system he must come

first. Teacher and citizen and politician, as such, must come a long way after; only as parents have they any standing at all.

A great deal of ridicule is cast upon the parents' right, though it is difficult to see why. The very people who most ridicule the rights of *other* parents are the most determined in upholding their own. The parent's right is the child's right. They are inseparable. It may be called an axiom of English law that so long as the parent does his duty to the child the State has no right to interfere, and only upon the neglect of the parent has the State any ground of action.

The principle applies in education just as in all other matters. Every child has an equal right to the best possible education. But he has a soul as well as a body, and the parent, as the natural guardian and protector of the child, has the right and duty to provide for both.

The child is to be trained first for God and next for the State, and the parent is responsible to both. But religious teaching is outside the province of the State, which has absolutely no right to interfere.

Therefore, every child has the same right to all the benefits and advantages of our educational system, and any attempt, such as we have seen, to force the child into any particular religious groove is a crime against God, against the child, and against the most elementary principles of justice.

CHAPTER XI.

HOW THE ACT OF 1902 WAS OPPOSED.

The Act of 1902 was opposed by the most abominable lying and misrepresentation. The only parallel in recent times was the opposition to the Home Rule proposals in the 'eighties.

We have to-day, as they had then, a party, a Press, and a Government in league with them against a great measure of justice and religious freedom, and, allowing for the difference in the two questions Catholics to-day have exactly the same methods to fight against as had the Nationalist Party thirty years ago. The same lying, the same slanders, the same collusion between the Government and the bitterest supporters of class ascendancy in religious and political matters. Members of the Government are also members of a vast politico-religious organisation having for its object the controlling in its own interest, and in its own words, of "every relation of human life," political, social, religious, and domestic. Now, as then, the Government used all their power and influence and the public taxes in aid of the law-breakers and against those who were fighting for freedom and religious liberty.

One of their commonest arguments is that it was wrong to disturb the compromise of 1870, which had worked so well and proved so satisfactory to the people of the country.

This argument comes badly from a party that even in 1874 tried to break down the "compromise" to suit their own ends.

Replying to Mr. John Bright and other Liberal speakers on July 27th, 1876, in Committee on the Education Bill, Mr. Pell said:—

"It was no longer a political but a caste party which advocated the extension of School Boards. That was shown by the silence with which the speech of the right hon. gentleman, the member for Birmingham, was listened to by his own party. . . . He thought the more they divested themselves of these caste prejudices the better. When those who supported this clause were accused of being reactionary" (what a blessed word that is; it may be made to mean anything) "and disturbing old settlements he reminded gentlemen opposite that in the desire to promote education the Act of 1870 was accepted as a compromise

"In the years 1874, 1875, and 1876, however, a Bill was brought into the House by a late member for Birmingham (Mr. Dixon) for the establishment of compulsory School Boards. Was that reactionary or progressive? It appeared to him very much like advancing backwards. In 1875, and again in 1876, the right hon. member for Birmingham, Mr. John Bright, voted for that disturbing Bill. The right hon. member for Bradford (Mr. Forster) voted for it three times. The noble lord, the Marquis of Hartington, voted for it once or twice, and yet these were the gentlemen who now talked of disturbing the Act of 1870. In 1874 a Bill was brought in by the hon.

member for Merthyr (Mr. Richard) to repeal altogether the 25th clause of the Act of 1870 (which says that 'the School Board *may, if they think fit,*' pay the fees of poor children in any school), and also to repeal the three miles distance under which children were exempted from being brought into attendance at Board schools.'

"It was rather hard to be accused of disturbing the settlement of 1870 when hon. gentlemen opposite, in their ardour for School Boards, had neglected the so-called compacts and compromise arrived at in that year." (Debates, p. 332.)

This quotation shows that in 1876, just as in 1906, no argument was too rotten to throw at the voluntary schools. Liberal members made the compromise in the hope that Board schools would supplant voluntary schools throughout the land, and their disappointment at the failure was frequently expressed. Mr. Rylands took the House into his confidence on July 20th, 1876, when he said: "Perhaps it was well that he should tell the House why it was that a number of hon. members with whom he acted in 1870 agreed to accept the compromise proposed by the late Government. They believed that whilst the arrangement was just and fair to the denominational schools, it did open up a prospect that the Board schools would be gradually established throughout the country, and that to a great extent the Board schools would absorb the denominational schools." (Page 249.)

"The noble lord said that denominational schools were handicapped in their struggle with Board schools. *It seemed to him that they ought to be so*

handicapped. The only excuse under which they could reasonably come to Parliament to ask for large grants of money was that they were voluntarily supported." (Pages 249-50.)

It is impossible for Catholics to conceive the influence possessed by the Nonconformist clergy over the minds of their supporters. Whilst boasting about their licence in religious matters, in which clergy ought to be leaders and teachers, they are perfect slaves to them in political and social matters in which private judgment is not only permissible but laudable.

To illustrate this I will give two of my own experiences. One, in which a Nonconformist raised this very question of education. I defended the Act of 1902 as just and fair all round. He said: "Do you mean to tell me that those great Nonconformist divines and preachers don't understand the Act as well as you? Do you mean to tell me that they would say it is unjust if it isn't? I don't care what evidence you bring forward, or how many copies of the Act you put before me, I'll never believe that." That I heard from a leading light amongst the Methodist body, a shrewd, hard-headed business man, who thought for himself in matters of faith, but took politics on trust from the pulpit. That one can be multiplied by millions. In another instance a man raised a discussion upon a point of history, in which he was hopelessly wrong. Here, again, we had a fairly intelligent man with an education and position above the average. When I put him right on a matter of fact, and offered to lend him a contem-

porary account of the transaction, he refused either to take my assurance or the evidence I offered against his parson. He answered: "The clergy know better than we do, and I take his word." And these people have the assurance to call Catholics "priest-ridden."

The Act was opposed by all kinds of misrepresentation, and every possible charge that could, upon any pretext at all, be brought against it was repeated *ad nauseam*.

I must, again, remind the reader that not once was it opposed upon any educational ground. The whole appeal was to prejudice and bigotry. Every Nonconformist pulpit for the time being became a political platform, and everything possible was done to rouse the bigotry latent in every Protestant, and particularly in every Nonconformist, against Rome. In addition to this they saw their chief weapon against the Anglican establishment made of no avail; they were no longer able to "use the Board schools so as to undermine the Church schools, which are the buttresses of the Church." No attempt was ever made to prove that the Act was unjust in any way, though its "injustice" was the theme of constant and bitter denunciation. Every care was taken to use words and phrases calculated to arouse religious and anti-Catholic prejudice, and, as we have seen, this was done all over the country in circumstances which permitted of no reply. It was denounced as a clerical attempt to rob the public purse. The Government was called "reactionary" and every other opprobrious name that could be invented by the dis-

appointed Nonconformists. In every possible form, and under every conceivable condition, the cry came up. Not definite Christian teaching, but the teaching that satisfies our demand, the teaching that may be, and has been, non-Christian and Unitarian.

Nonconformists everywhere took up the attitude of the Pharisee in the temple. "Our teaching is Christian, yours is sectarian." Ours must be paid for by the State, yours ought not, and shall not, be paid for. Passive Resistance leagues were formed, composed of men who refused to pay the education rate on the pretext that they couldn't pay for religious teaching which they didn't believe. That Nonconformist conscience which had slumbered peacefully at the bottom of their pockets for 32 years under the pressure of the millions extorted from the unwilling ratepayers of all creeds, now woke up and protested against the "injustice" of compelling them to disgorge a portion of their plunder. We heard a great deal of the iniquity of the State supporting sectarian teaching at the cost of the rates. But it came just 30 years too late. The injustice was the same in 1870 as in 1902, but these guardians of the public purse, morals, and conscience slumbered heavily under the soporific influence of the people's millions pouring into their pockets. And they did not wake up because they were no longer getting these millions, for they got more under the Act of 1902 than they did before. They woke up because they found that a little percentage had commenced to dribble back into the pockets of those whom they likened to the poor publican, whose only privilege was to pay. These

leagues sprang up all over the country, and put forth their plea in the police courts against the encroachments of the "clericals," as they called us. But the movement was never popular; it was confined to parsons and politicians, and the parson, whose work was being done by the rate-paid teacher in the Council schools, was loudest of all in denouncing the alleged injustice.

From a comparison of more than a hundred reports of these cases, it is found that the "clerical" resisters form one in five, out of all proportion to their number. The rest are usually politicians of one kind or another who have achieved a kind of cheap notoriety as "martyrs" in the eyes of their deluded followers. The plea very often put forward was that they objected to pay for Romish teaching, and it has been said that they only objected to pay for Church of England teaching because it approximated to that of Rome. Such a plea, in the eyes of all reasonable men, simply condemns their own conduct, since it assumes their right to compel the Catholic to pay for teaching that conforms to their religious standard, without any corresponding obligation on their part to treat us on an equal footing. A very prominent leader and passive resister seriously put forward the plea that the moment the money of the Catholic and the Churchman touched the money of the Nonconformist in the municipal cash-box, we forfeited all right to any voice in its disposal, and only the Nonconformist ought to be consulted in the spending of it.

Many local education authorities put off as long as

possible the day for commencing their duties under the Act, and put every possible obstacle in the way of its just and impartial administration. Notorious amongst these are those of the West Riding of Yorkshire, Durham, and nearly all the Welsh County Councils.

Here are some of the statements of passive resisters and their supporters: "Under the present Education Bill (1906) the ratepayers will still have to pay for a system of sectarian schools, including cost of repairs, enlargements, alterations, and playgrounds."—*Manchester Guardian*, September 10, 1906.

"Father Thompson thinks we are making profit out of the Act of 1903. Is it not his co-religionists who are doing this? Dr. Clifford being an authority, there are Catholic churches, not a few, that, by the employment as teachers of the unpaid celebrate (?) orders of Romanism, reap large profits from the running of their schools. They receive amounts equivalent to ordinary secular salaries, but the support of their actual teachers costs very much less, and in these schools Father Thompson's doctrines are unequivocally taught. In this way Rome is on the rates and flourishing at the expense of indignant Protestants."—Rev. A. D. Garrow, Baptist Bethel, Waterfoot, March 28th, 1911. From the same, March 10th, 1911: "If the State of which I am a subject does injure the conscience of Jew, secularist, or other (by making him pay for the teaching of Mr. Garrow's doctrines) *he must of himself bear the onus of his own protest, even as I do mine. I am the keeper of no man's conscience but my own.*"

“ By the Act of 1902 was transferred to the rates part of the cost of the voluntary schools not privately defrayed from the rates. Also, as the result of the Bishop of Manchester’s amendment, not only the whole cost of the teaching, but also the cost of the repairs, beautifying, etc., was charged to the public purse.”

Here we have three gross misrepresentations by a minister of the gospel, and these statements are being spread about and multiplied in every rural district, where the people are too ignorant to verify them.

Dr. Clifford, at the Baptist Union, said: “ What they had to do was to settle the question on the broad principle that no rates and no taxes should go to the support of Romanism.”

Mr. Lloyd George, at Luton (1904): “ The defaulting Authorities Bill said that unless the local authorities in England and Wales gave money to denominational schools out of the rates they would be compelled by process of law. The Government was empowered to take money and hand it out to these persons, and say: ‘ Use this money; it is public money for your own schools.’ He could give that meeting an assurance. They could pass as many Bills as they liked, but they would never get the Welsh Councils to levy a rate for the schools that treated the children of their faith with insult, contempt, or unfairness.”

Lord Stanley, speaking at Leeds, Nov. 22nd, 1904, thought the situation was much more serious than Mr. Lloyd George realised, and at the same meeting a resolution protesting against any separate treat-

ment for Roman Catholics was passed by the meeting. Other resolutions declaiming against denominational teaching in schools, and denouncing any further compromise on religious teaching were passed with acclamation.

Incidentally, we may notice that a very large number of the recipients of knighthoods, and other honours under the Liberal administration, have been distinguished for their bitterness and hostility to the voluntary schools.

In April, 1906, the West Riding County Council adopted a system of petty persecution of the teachers in denominational schools, and deducted the proportion of salaries for the time spent in the religious teaching in Catholic and Church schools, whilst paying Council school teachers in full. They were encouraged by the Government, and supported in the spending of the rates for the costs of the persecution, and eventually they lost the case, and had to treat all teachers equally, after appealing until the Highest Court decided against them. But the Welsh County Councils have been the most unscrupulous in their active hostility. They delayed the Act until the last possible moment, and have consistently, and almost universally, persecuted both children, teachers, and parents by their administration of it.

Instances of injustice were brought before the House of Commons, and the Minister of Education, who was one of the active persecutors, denied any *official* knowledge of notorious cases of injustice.

As a result of their action, teachers were kept without salaries, and the children in the voluntary

schools were kept without fires in the winter. The children were unable to bring an action against their persecutors, but the teachers and managers of some Church schools successfully sued the Councils, which were encouraged by the Government to spend the rates in carrying the case to every Court of Appeal, and every obstacle was placed by the Government in the way of the teachers and managers of the schools.

The County Councils and other authorities throughout Wales refused to administer the Act, and as will be seen from the speech of Mr. Lloyd George quoted above, the Government passed an Act empowering the Board of Education to administer the Act over the heads of the authorities. The representatives of the Councils then met, and Mr. Lloyd George suggested a scheme by which the Act would be administered, and the local authorities, by the methods above described, including the heartless treatment of the children, were enabled to carry on the voluntary schools without spending a penny of the rates, though these rates were still collected from Catholic, Churchman and Nonconformist alike. A few months ago the Insurance Bill was made ineffective as a preventive measure by refusing to pay sickness allowance during the first three days, thus endangering thousands of lives to save half-a-million a year. But the party that supported the Government in this parsimonious policy coolly proposed to spend "a million pounds a year" for the purpose of persecuting the Catholic and the Churchman, and crushing out their schools.—Sir G. White's address at the Baptist Union Conference in April, 1906.

Speaking of Dean Lynch's letter in the *Manchester Guardian*, June, 1903, Mr. Hollowell says, June 5th: "Nor does the Dean mention the enormous rents his churches in Lancashire have received from school income, sufficient, in many cases, to pay for the buildings over and over again. Last of all, he forgets that the new Act will make the ratepayers pay for the continuous ordinary repairs of his day schools."

The whole of this passage is false. The "enormous rents" were an annual allowance made *on paper to Catholic schools in common with all other schools, and including Nonconformist denominational schools*. This was allowed to be put down as rent simply for the purpose of making up the local income of the school, so as to meet the penal clause in the Act of 1870, and prevent the efficiency grant *earned* by the school being cut down on account of poverty. The only repairs to the buildings paid for under the Act of 1902 are the repairs due to ordinary wear and tear, and such as are paid by the tenant of any building, even where rent is paid to the landlord. Landlord's repairs and all structural alterations do not come from the rates. But it is by such methods that the hostility to the Act is fostered and kept alive. I have a number of reports of passive resistance cases and Free Church Council meetings, proving conclusively that hostility to Rome is one of the chief causes of opposition, but that point will be proved from the official reports of the party.

In looking up material for this I met with a very striking, but very typical, sample of the Noncon-

formist lie that is so universally adduced against our claims; it recalled another equally false and unjustifiable, but of such importance as illustrations that they are worth recording.

The Bishop of Manchester, speaking on the Bill of 1906, said that *the difference between the Government grants and the actual cost of maintenance of the voluntary schools over and above the cost of buildings, repairs, etc., from 1870 to 1900, was £51,250,000, which had been provided voluntarily by the friends of the denominational schools.* Writing in the *Manchester Guardian*, April 23rd, 1906, Mr. Hollowell, who was the authority on the Nonconformist side, and whose figures were always implicitly accepted by them, accused the Bishop of giving false figures, since, as shown by the Government return (Cd. 1,476, 1870 to 1902, that is, including two years more than the Bishop gave), the total "*voluntary contributions*" was only twenty-four millions, as against the fifty-one and a quarter millions of the Bishop's, so that his lordship had overstated the amount of the cost by the sum of twenty-seven millions.

The truth of the matter is that the Bishop was right, and the Nonconformist had been guilty of the usual manipulation.

The Government return certainly gives the amount of "*voluntary contributions*" towards maintenance as £24,187,991 from 1870 to 1902, but the Bishop spoke of the *difference between the Government grant and the cost of maintenance being fifty-one and a quarter millions, of which "voluntary contributions" is only a portion.*

For example, for the year 1891, the Government return quoted gives the amount of "*voluntary subscriptions* towards maintenance" as £779,000, whilst the totals of the Financial Reform Almanac for the same year give for the *amount raised locally for maintenance as £2,271,158, that is, nearly a million and a half raised from the local sources, and therefore contributed by the friends of denominational education over and above the Government grant, and in addition to the amount* put down simply as voluntary contributions, towards maintenance in the Government return.

This man knew perfectly well that the Bishop was right, because, whenever it suited the Nonconformist case, he was able to analyse and classify the main sources of income as well as any other person, and his usual method of picking out such figures and facts as suited their purpose proved that the falsification and its inferences were not accidental.

The other case is one of pure invention.

Dr. Clifford, speaking in London, said that the Church of England had received for her schools a very large sum of money from the rates. I think the amount mentioned was about 90 millions. At that time Church schools had not received from the rates anything at all.

The statement was flashed from one end of the country to the other, and there was some correspondence in the Manchester Press, Nonconformists maintaining the truth of a statement for which there was not an atom of foundation.

These two instances form a fitting close to the

chapter in the methods by which the Act of 1902 was opposed by Nonconformists and of the methods by which their recognised leaders and experts tried to impose upon the country and arouse sectarian feeling against Catholics.

All direct attacks on the voluntary schools having failed, the Government is now seeking to deal a fatal blow at the denominational system through administrative changes which they hope to smuggle through Parliament under cover of the Home Rule controversy and with the aid of the Nationalist vote. This being a money Bill, the House of Lords is powerless; and if they succeed this year may see the end of our schools.

The Kempe Committee on Rating was appointed in 1912, and presented their report in March, 1914.

They recommend the abolition of all existing payments, under which a fixed grant of 42s. 10d. and certain grants for special subjects are paid for each child in every efficient school.

These are a statutory liability towards each school, and are paid on account of and credited in the books of the local education authority to each particular school, which has ground of action if they are improperly kept back.

Instead of this the school is to be ignored, and a reduced grant of 36s. per child in the area is to be paid to the local education authority, irrespective of efficiency. In addition, a grant of 40 per cent. of the net expenditure, less the product of a 7d. rate, is to be paid to the area. This completes the main outline. Expenditure supersedes efficiency as the

basis in allocating the grant upon which *the school ceases to have any claim*. This is a revolution not to be appreciated until it comes into operation.

For small schools a special grant of 5s. per child is to be paid "*provided the Board of Education is satisfied as to the necessity of continuing it as a separate institution.*"

This proviso repeals section 9 of the Act of 1902, and completes the plot against the voluntary school system.

These proposals sweep away all existing safeguards for voluntary schools, and place all schools at the mercy of the present Board of Education, pledged to destroy every denominational school, which will thus be enabled to impose any regulation they choose as a condition of any school being maintained by the local education authority, and the elementary schools will go the way of the secondary schools.

These proposals must not become law without the safeguards now existing in the unrepealed proviso of section 97 of the Act of 1870 and section 9 of the Act of 1902 being re-enacted.

If these are refused we shall know that their object is neither educational efficiency nor national economy, but that their only object is to starve out the voluntary schools by refusing maintenance except under impossible conditions.

On the other hand, by the setting aside of the Cowper Temple clause, a Conservative Board of Education might make freedom of religious teaching or right of entry a condition for the maintaining of the provided schools.

CHAPTER XII.

THE WORKING OF THE ACT OF 1902.

The Act of 1902 introduced great changes into our educational system.

(1) For the first time religious belief and teaching was no bar to a share in the rates, and the three millions of children in the voluntary schools were given, to a great extent, the educational advantages hitherto restricted to the children in the Board Schools, whilst their parents and supporters were relieved from the injustice of paying twice for what their Nonconformist neighbours got for one payment in the rates. Denominationalists, even under the new Act, had to provide and keep in repair all the school buildings, and this was a very heavy charge which their more fortunate neighbours still get from the rates as before.

(2) It put all education, elementary and higher, under the same authority, and made that authority responsible for raising, as well as spending, the rates. It gave to the local education authority full control over all educational expenditure, and took out of the hands of the managers, even in the voluntary schools, the power to interfere in financial matters in the slightest degree. All grants, etc., formerly paid direct to the managers, and for which they were responsible, are now paid to the local Education Committee, and no money at all passes through the

hands of the priest or vicar, as the case may be. This is a point that ought to be thoroughly understood in connection with the opposition to the Act.

In many cases a profit is made on the voluntary school and goes into the public treasury.

To ensure proper management and administration of non-provided or voluntary schools, the local authority have the right to appoint one-third of the managers, and this gives them full control of the secular education, and everything connected with that part of the school work. This public control was previously exercised, and exercised very stringently, through the Education Department. Now, *the local authorities have absolute power to stop all payments in the event of any irregularity.* By the Act of 1902 this was transferred to the local elected authority, and no money would be paid on account of any school that did not conform to the requirements of the public managers in all things pertaining to the secular equipment of the school, which is all that they have a right to demand, and all that we can possibly concede. At the same time it reserved to the foundation managers, such as the priest, vicar, etc., and any laymen associated with them under the Act, the sole control of the religious teaching of the school, including the appointment and dismissal of the teachers, which is the vital principle in the conducting of a denominational school, but this was subject to a veto of the authority upon educational grounds. The Act, therefore, gave to the committee representing the ratepayers every power that they may legitimately claim, and reserves to the managers,

who represent the parents, and those who provide the school, such powers as are necessary to carry on the school as a denominational school. Both parties have their legitimate rights and powers strictly defined under the Act, and the Act has worked well and smoothly in all cases where each party has been content to act in its own legitimate sphere. The most important provision, and the one that was most essentially just to the one party, and most objectionable to the Nonconformists, was that, on coming into operation the whole cost of the working expenses was put upon the rates, which, heretofore, had been the monopoly of the Nonconformist section of the rate-payers, though Churchmen and Catholics had paid their full share for 32 years, a fact which is persistently suppressed by their enemies. Even under this provision we only get back a portion of what we are entitled to have by every principle of honesty, justice, and religious equality. In view of the nature of the attacks on the voluntary schools under the operation of the Act of 1902, and of the arguments of men who are supposed to be educational experts, and who certainly ought to know better, it will be worth while to discuss the position as fully as it is possible to do so.

As an example of the kind of argument, we will take one that was seriously put forward in the House of Commons on March 8th, 1912. Sir G. C. Marks, on introducing the Bill to make Cowper-Temple teaching compulsory in half the schools in the country, including about 300 Catholic schools, said: "A school may be continued as a school if the local

authority are so eager to bring about dogmatic teaching. We do not say 'shut up your school or transfer it.' If you wish to keep it on, you must keep it on at the expense of those who believe in that teaching."

With all respect to the speaker, this is nonsense, as the local authority has nothing whatever to do with dogmatic teaching in any school at all. In another place he said: "The County Council syllabus, now known as the Cowper-Temple scheme, does not advance my particular beliefs, or the denomination with which I am connected; the religious education which is given under this clause is teaching not characteristic of any religious principle. The religious education given in the schools (in Cornwall) is based upon a syllabus prepared by a committee of which the Bishop of St. Germain's was a prominent member, and unanimously approved by that committee.

"I have heard of no complaint whatever from the schools in Cornwall, where this particular teaching has been adopted." Why should he? These are all Council schools. Later on he said that he was asking "the teachers to read prayers that had been arranged and approved by the Bishop of St. Germain's."

This is a very common argument with the average Nonconformist. Years ago it used to be said that as Canon Toole was a member of the Manchester School Board, when their syllabus of religious teaching was drawn up, that it met with his approval, and ought to be acceptable to the Catholics of Manchester.

During the debates of a few years ago it was said

(I think by Mr. Birrell) that because the syllabus in Hampshire was drawn up by a mixed committee of Churchmen and Nonconformists, it should be received by Churchmen and taught in Church schools.

Similarly, when Mr. McKenna was Minister of Education, he argued at Burnley that since Cowper-Temple teaching was satisfactory to those parents, *who chose to send their children to Council schools*, it has been approved by the country, and, therefore, it was just to make it universal and compulsory in all schools.

“Almost without exception for 38 years the local authorities had with one voice chosen undenominationalism *and rejected secularism*. After that it was impossible to say that it is otherwise than the will of the people that *the Bible shall be taught in the schools*. . . . When they found through the ballot-box that the parents had everywhere voted for undenominational teaching and had expressed in every way their satisfaction with the schools of the old School Board type, he could only say he would be unwise if he did not travel along the road of that experience.”

This was Mr. McKenna's justification for attempting to force a Nonconformist interpretation of the Bible upon Catholic and Church children throughout England and Wales, yet in that very town of Burnley one-half of the population was willing to build and keep in repair at great cost to themselves eighteen voluntary schools giving denominational teaching, rather than send their children to the twelve Council

schools giving that undenominational teaching which, according to Mr. McKenna, they were so anxious to enjoy. Upon that occasion Mr. McKenna told the truth inadvertently, when he declared the choice to be not *denominational or undenominational teaching, but undenominational religious teaching or none at all.*

I have taken these instances of the leaders of the anti-denominational party so that it cannot be said that it is the contention of obscure or unknown persons only and not of recognised leaders. All these arguments show a complete and utter misunderstanding of the question at issue. The local authority in any town in England has no more to do with the *kind* of religious teaching given in the schools under its charge than any reader of this book, and any person who speaks or writes of the discretion or power of choice of the Councils in this matter is either ignorant of the very elements of the question, or is intentionally trying to deceive his hearers.

The local authority is absolutely powerless in the matter. There is no such thing as "local popular control in education." The local authority no more controls the education in their own schools than they control the Bank of England. They may say, perhaps, whether religious teaching shall be given or not. That is the extent of their control. If it is to be given they have no power to say what kind. That is decided for them in the Act of 1870 by the Cowper-Temple clause, which runs: "No catechism or formulary distinctive of any particular denomination shall be taught in the school." The managers of any

non-provided school have more control over religious education than all the local authorities in England, and as the parents by using the school really control the kind of religious teaching given in the school, there is more "popular control" in one Catholic school than in all the Council schools in the country.

If we are to take all the sayings of these experts at their face value, we must admit that they know little or nothing of what they are talking about, and that is really the only possible conclusion. There is no such thing as that local popular control of which we hear so much in connection with Council schools. To get any kind of local popular control you must go into the voluntary school. There you get it, indirectly it is true, but very effectually, since it enables the Catholic, the Churchman, the Jew, and the Wesleyan to get the kind of religious teaching he requires, whilst any such thing is impossible in the Council school.

The Catholic and the Churchman who sits upon an Education Committee can only see that the instruction is not made too aggressively Nonconformist or anti-denominational, or even anti-Christian as it might easily become, even though it is "Bible teaching." Under the Act of 1902 also we find that the voluntary school, so far as the secular education is concerned, and so far as money matters are concerned, is entirely and completely under the control of the local education authority and the Board of Education, yet they have the assurance to ask that our schools shall be publicly controlled.

The priest does not handle a single penny of the

money spent on the school, but we have all kinds of charges and insinuations as to spending "public money for sectarian purposes," though every penny is spent upon the children, under conditions laid down by the Board of Education, and the local committee. The voluntary managers do control the religious teaching, and properly so. They select the teacher, and by this selection, to which Nonconformists object so strongly, they ensure the kind of religious instruction required by the parents. Because of this selection of the teacher we hear the cry of "tests for teachers." But there are tests in the Council school. By virtue of the provision of the school, and their possessing equal rights with other ratepayers, the Catholic and the Churchman has the right of selecting the man who must train his children. But have Nonconformists the same right? Certainly, whether in their own denominational schools or in Council schools. In the former by selection of teachers just as the Catholic. In the Council schools by exclusion of denominational teaching and surroundings. The teacher in the Council school is appointed subject to certain conditions as to religious teaching. The school being provided entirely out of public money, every man has the same right to appointment as a matter of justice. But nevertheless the Nonconformist gets in the Council school exactly what the Catholic gets in the Catholic school, only by a different method. A Catholic, a Churchman, or a Jew may be appointed as a teacher in a Council school, but he is appointed on the express condition that *whatever he may be*

outside he goes into the school as a Nonconformist, that, in fact he assumes an "undenominational" muzzle, and teaches no catechism or formulary distinctive of any denomination. Here is the test. There is no getting away from it. What we get in one way they get in another, the result is the same, the conditions the same, only the method is different.

When we hear that such and such a Catholic is teaching in a Council school, we must remember that a man is not appointed as a Churchman or a Catholic, but only on the express condition that he leaves his religion outside, and inside the school conducts himself as a *Nonconformist*. If he taught or posed as a Churchman or Catholic whilst performing his duties as a teacher he would be reprimanded, and if he persisted would be dismissed, so that it is not a Catholic teacher, but as a teacher minus the Catholic that he holds his situation.

It should be perfectly clear then that there is no popular control in the Council schools, and that there are very stringent tests for teachers, also that the teaching is essentially and fundamentally Nonconformist. No objection has ever been raised against the Act of 1902 on educational grounds. From an educational point of view everybody admits it has been a great success. This was admitted during the debate, in March, 1912, by the President of the Board of Education. It is also universally admitted that the Act is working well wherever the education authority does its work honestly and impartially. What then is the objection? It is admittedly not educational, and an Education Act

should not be opposed upon other grounds, unless it can be shown to be unjust, which is certainly not the case with the Act under discussion.

The opposition is purely sectarian and political. To prove this we need go no further than the recognised leaders of the Opposition. "Rome on the rates" is the battle-cry of Dr. Clifford, the arch-apostle of passive resistance, who boasted at Leeds that "God had called him to preach the gospel of passive resistance." At a meeting of the Northern Counties Education League at Liverpool, November 19th, it was openly admitted that the Bill was not opposed on its merits, but because it did not suit their political principles.

Mr. Lloyd George put the matter in a nutshell during the debates on the Bill: "The Bible inside, and the priest outside," and that may be taken as the maxim of the party—hatred of the Church, and opposition to her priests and teachings.

These are the men who pose during education debates as men of Christian sympathies and wide toleration, and even as the champions of liberty and religious equality. During the debates, and since the Act was passed, we have heard a good deal of the "Nonconformist Conscience." It is their own phrase, and we cannot be blamed for taking up the challenge they have thrown down. Is Rome on the rates? Is it a matter of conscience or politics with our opponents? Do they pay for sectarian teaching? It has probably been a matter for surprise, and given rise to much doubt as to the justice of the denominational position, that no denial of their claim

has ever been made when they have appeared in the police courts protesting against paying for sectarian teaching. They make a statement that is not true, yet the falsehood has never been publicly challenged. At first sight it certainly seems strange that hundreds of ministers can get up in the box with a falsehood on their lips, and no one takes the trouble to contradict it.

The explanation is very simple. No one has the legal right to challenge it. Legally the plea is non-existent; the Court has no cognisance of it, therefore no one at all has the right to deny its truth, and they are quite well aware of this. The dock of the police court is as safe from opposition or contradiction as the pulpits in their own chapels. The Court has to decide one thing, Is the rate properly laid, and owing? If so, it must be paid. A legal objection would, and could, be entertained and dealt with. The passive resisters' plea is one of the crooked methods of the Nonconformist conscience. Some readers may think that their consciences ought to be treated more respectfully, and if it were *really* conscience it would be so dealt with. They have dragged in the mud for the purpose of persecuting the helpless Catholic child; it is their own fault if it gets hard knocks in the process. Is Rome on the rates? That question hardly admits a definite yes or no, but I should say, decidedly not. It is certainly not on the rates to the same extent as Nonconformity, if it is on the rates at all. Only a small part of the time is spent on religious teaching in Catholic schools, probably it never exceeds one-fifth. It is quite

probable, and even likely, that the annual value of the school buildings and their upkeep more than covers the cost of the time spent upon our religious teaching. But if Rome *is on the rates*, Rome has *exactly the same right to be on the rates as Nonconformity, which is very much on the rates*. Rome pays rates, and has equal rights with all other rate-payers, therefore Rome has just as good a claim to be on the rates as the members of any Nonconformist body.

That is the proper reply to the passive resister, and to all opponents of the Act of 1902. But even some Catholics say that since the public maintains the schools they have a right to control the schools. To all such weak-kneed Catholics then the reply is: Catholics and Churchmen are the public, they are a majority of the public, and have the same right as any other section of the public. If the public pays the cost of the religious teaching, and secures the right of the Nonconformist parent by excluding denominational teaching from the Council schools, the public must also pay the cost of Catholic and Church teaching, and secure the right of the Catholic and Church parent, which, by the nature of the case, can only be done by giving the representative of the parent the right to select the teacher, and control the surroundings of the same. Again, the conditions and results are the same, only the method differs. There is no getting beyond that even on their own principles. Do Nonconformists pay for sectarian teaching? Most emphatically no! The whole amount paid by Nonconformist ratepayers

cannot possibly cover the cost of the schools they use, and nothing is left to pay for ours. It is the Churchman and Catholic who pay for the teaching of the Nonconformists, even under the Act of 1902. The number of children attending the two kinds of schools where there is free choice is a fair index of the relative numbers of ratepayers, if anything it gives the Nonconformists an advantage. Here are a few figures to show what the position really is. They are taken from returns from 1906-7, but the proportion will be much the same to-day: Walsall, number of children in voluntary schools, 5,682, cost to rates £1,798, Council schools 10,620, £8,761. In addition, £49,000 spent on building and other Council school charges. Manchester, numbers about equal, rate 1s. 8½d. in £. £50,000 to be spent on replacing and altering Council schools in the near future. Voluntary schools 3½d. in £.

The proportion spent upon the two classes of schools will vary according to the locality, but the greater cost of maintenance in Council schools, added to the cost of buildings, etc., makes it impossible for the rates of voluntary school supporters to be used up for the maintenance of their schools, and in practically all districts the balance will not be on the Nonconformist side, but upon ours.

Now for a word upon a subject of the very first importance to Catholics, the declaration of Mr. John Dillon as to Catholic wishes and policy. During the debate on the Single Schools Bill on Friday, March 9th, he reminded the House of Parliament that the Irish party had always tried to remove the Noncon-

formist grievance in these areas. Since it has been shown that there is not a Nonconformist grievance, it would be truer to say that they have always tried to cripple the Church schools to curry favour with the Nonconformists.

What really happened in 1902 was that in the districts where Nonconformists would not go to the trouble of building or opening schools, for it cannot be too often repeated that that was the main cause of the trouble, Mr. Dillon proposed that the essential principle of the Bill should be suspended, and, instead of the local authority appointing one-third of the managers as representing the ratepayers, two-thirds should be appointed by the authority, and elected by the parents. The result would have been constant friction, and all kinds of attempts to destroy the denominational character of the Church school; turn it into a Council school, and inflict a very real and great grievance upon the people who had built and supported the school. The amendment was rejected because it did nothing to remedy the corresponding grievance of Catholics and others where they had no choice of school.

CHAPTER XIII.

COWPER-TEMPLE TEACHING SECTARIAN NONCONFORMIST TEACHING.

Udenominational really means either distinctive of no denomination, or common to all denominations. So also the meaning of unsectarian.

It is not possible for the wit of man to devise any form of religious teaching that can possibly fulfil these conditions, or even approximately fulfil them in England and Wales.

The most elementary form of religious teaching must be the sectarian maximum of some of the 280 denominations of Protestantism registered in England, and, therefore, is sectarian and illegal under the Cowper-Temple clause. There is not a common religious teaching, there is not even a common Protestant teaching. There are six great groups in the country, Catholics, Churchmen, Jews, Nonconformists of all kinds, Unitarians, and Secularists, all having equal educational rights. Of these, Jews stand apart as non-Christian, teaching their religion by authority. Unitarians are non-Christians, who deny authority, and, so far as regards Christian teaching, may be grouped with the non-religious Secularists. With the exception of the Jews, all non-Catholic groups have the common bond of protest against "the errors of Rome." That is their only common ground. The Unitarians and Secularists

protest also against the "errors" and "superstitions" of the other Protestant bodies.

Taking another division, and the division that really counts in the education question, we find that the non-Christian Jew and the protesting Anglican Churchman have, in common with the Catholic Church, the claim to teach by authority, and that their doctrines are summarised in a form called a creed, or "profession of faith," and we find that in fact the Nonconformists do actually use these two words in place of the word creed, and then boast that they have no "creed." All Nonconformist sects are banded together in the assertion of unlimited private judgment of the Scriptures, and the denial of all authority in matters of faith. Without disparagement, we may say that their creed is "read the Bible and believe what you like." One Congregationalist writer puts their principle as, "We have no creed but the Bible; of the Bible we have no interpreter but private judgment."

Dr. Clifford sums up the Baptist creed, the individual reads the Bible and "determines for himself what is the faith of the Church."

In matters of faith, man cannot be neutral. Our Lord Himself said, "He that is not with Me is against Me, and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth."

This is, and must be, the Catholic principle in religious education. It ought to be the principle of all who profess Christianity at all. Unfortunately this is not the case.

But it establishes one thing. If you do not accept

Christ and his teaching you deny Christ and His teaching. If you do not accept His Church and her teaching, you deny His Church and her teaching. Not to teach Christianity is to deny it, and not to teach Catholic doctrine is to deny Catholic doctrine. It follows that not to teach *definitely* the doctrine of the Incarnation, the Redemption, and the Resurrection is to deny them. In the same manner, to habitually practise, and use, and teach a doctrine that does not inculcate respect for authority is to deny authority in matters of faith. Religion is the one thing that, by its very nature, and by the command of God Himself, cannot be left out or ignored; to do either is to deny God, who commanded it as a first principle. For the Catholic there is no need to state the principles of the Catholic faith. For any reader who may not be a Catholic we will just say that we are bound to believe "all that God has revealed." We are to know and believe what that is by the testimony, teaching, and authority of the Catholic Church, which "God appointed to teach all nations." This is a fair summary of Catholic principles. The Church of England, like the Catholic Church, claims to be apostolical in her succession and doctrine, and to teach the faith by authority, and, by virtue of this descent, she claims the power to decide in controversies of faith.

In her formularies the Church of England does, in fact, teach by authority the great fundamental truths of Christianity, and in this, and in the teaching by authority stands in the education controversy on the

same footing as the Catholic Church, and has exactly the same rights in regard to her schools and children.

Nonconformists have various doctrines, they believe what they like, but they have the common principle of insisting on the completeness and sufficiency of the Bible as a rule of faith altogether independent and apart from any authoritative interpretation. All their formularies deny any such right. There is no need to go into detail as to the differences, no matter how important they may be, since the whole of the Free Churches have agreed upon a common educational policy, and we need only show what that policy is, and show further that so far from being undenominational and unsectarian, it is inter-denominational, and the teaching of the sectarian formulary of one or more of the sects to make good our case against it. As we saw from the quotation of Dr. Clifford in Chapter IX, there is no such thing as "undenominationalism," or a common form of Christianity.

The difficulty of defining this is as old as the question of rate-aided education, as will be seen from the following quotations from the debates of 1870.

Mr. Forster was charged with having favoured denominational teaching, and his difficulty, along with the question, was to find out whatever was meant by the latter term. All kinds of pretexts have been tried to evade the issue, and the usual way is to describe it as undogmatic teaching, or something of that kind, and when we ask the meaning of undogmatic, we are told that it is unsectarian or undenominational. The difficulty is well illustrated by

Mr. Forster's own words :

"A most earnest, intelligent, and influential deputation came to us from Wales. It had partly emanated from a conference of Nonconformist ministers. The first resolution of this conference had said that 'Any system of national education . . . must be free, *secular, unsectarian*, and compulsory,' and the second said that it was not intended to exclude or to oppose the reading of the Bible. *Upon asking for an explanation of the phrase 'secular and unsectarian,' the hon. member for Merthyr frankly confessed that there was a difference of opinion amongst themselves, and it was thought that by using the two words they might get over the difficulty.*

"Another deputation from the Congregational Union was to the effect that there should be no 'dogma' taught in the rate-supported schools. *I asked whether the word 'dogma' was intended to apply to the dogmas held by one set of Christians as against another, or did it mean the dogmas held by all Christians, and I found that it did not mean the latter. I only bring forward these inconsistencies to show that all who have endeavoured to deal with the question have discovered its difficulties.*" (2nd reading speech.)

Mr. Dixon, the head of the Nonconformist League, also referred to the difficulty.

Speaking of his committee, who were men of all creeds :

" ' They came to the conclusion that the religious difficulty should be overcome ' by recommending

that education in our national schools should be unsectarian.

"When the Education League became known to the country they were asked what they meant by 'unsectarian.' They answered that they meant that in the schools there should be taught no creeds, catechisms, or tenets that were peculiar to any sect, but no sooner had they furnished that answer than they received numberless questions as to what they meant about the Bible.

"The difference between an unsectarian and a secular system was that in both you would exclude all Christian dogma, but in an unsectarian system you would not have to exclude Christian precepts. . . . They were told that the word unsectarian was tricky, that the thing was unmitigated nonsense, that it was impossible. The argument everywhere was that religion must pervade the whole of the school teaching, that all morality was based upon religion, that all religion was based upon religious dogmas, and, therefore, that these dogmas must be taught in the schools."

"Archdeacon Horne said that unsectarian religion would be religion out of which all religion had been picked piece by piece. *The Union feel that they could not advocate sectarian schools without coming face to face with the difficulty that if they should have such schools in this country they must have them also in Ireland.*

"Lord Harrowby said that if they gave assistance to denominational education generally they would also extend the system to Roman Catholics, and there was no use struggling against it."

This is quite sufficient to show the absurdity of the word unsectarian as applied to religious teaching. It is admitted that the Board school religion is not Catholic, not Anglican, not Wesleyan, since all these are specially and explicitly shut out. It cannot be undenominational or unsectarian since that is a manifest impossibility by common consent of all parties. What, then, can it be?

The Free Church Council asks for a "Christian unsectarian school within easy reach of every family."

We have already seen how impossible their definition really is.

The only "Christian unsectarian teaching" possible is the teaching of the Catholic Church, which embraces all truth, and is unsectarian in the only true sense. Again quoting Dr. Clifford, "the dominant note of Cowper-Templeism is exclusion, or the shutting out of the denomination." It shuts out, and was intended to shut out, the teaching of the Catholic and Anglican Churches; it also shuts out, but was *not* intended to shut out, the teaching of the Wesleyan Church. It admits, and was intended from the very beginning to admit, the teaching of those churches which, instead of creeds, have only "declarations" and "principles" of faith, and such teaching was foisted upon the country by trickery and deceit, and has been maintained and continued by similar means and methods.

The two most important, and at the same time the most aggressively political, of these churches are the Congregational and Baptist. For all practical purposes they may be counted as one, and even their own

members admit the close resemblance both of theology and polity.

They have no official exposition of faith except in "the Year Book" of the one and the "Hand Book" of the other. Their most eminent divines have no greater authority to lay down what is the teaching of their respective churches than the most ignorant collier, or farm labourer, or even the schoolboy. As Dr. Clifford put it so aptly and correctly, "by their very constitution" it belongs to any individual, no matter how ignorant, "to determine for himself what is the teaching of the Church."

The Congregational Year Book contains a declaration of faith and order, which is the only official and authoritative statement of their principles, and even this is not binding upon any member since it merely declares what is "commonly believed amongst them," and "reserves to each one the most perfect liberty of conscience" (preliminary notes 5).

In the Baptist Handbook we find the Baptist Union put forth their principle, or creed, stated thus: "That our Lord Jesus Christ is the sole and absolute authority in all matters pertaining to faith and practice, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and that each Church has liberty to interpret and administer his laws."

In view of the persecuting spirit now being displayed by the Baptist leaders their "object" is of peculiar interest. It is thus stated: "To maintain the right of all men, everywhere, to freedom from disadvantage, taxation, and restraint in matters purely religious."

The Congregational "sectarian formulary" is given in the creed, or, as they call it, the "Declaration of faith, order, and discipline of the Congregational or independent dissenters." There are seven preliminary notes explaining the "creed," of which No. 4 is perhaps the most important. It runs: "It is not intended that the following statement should be put forth with any authority, or as a standard to which assent should be required." No. 5: "Disallowing the utility of creeds and articles of religion as a bond of union, and protesting against subscription to any human formularies as a term of Communion, Congregationalists are yet willing to declare, for general information, what is commonly believed among them, reserving to each one the most perfect liberty of conscience."

No. 7: "Notwithstanding their jealousy of subscription to creeds and articles, and their disapproval of the imposition of any human standard, whether of faith or discipline, they are far more agreed in their doctrines and practices than any Church which enjoins subscription, and enforces a human standard of orthodoxy, and they believe that there is no minister and no church amongst them that would deny the substance of any of the following doctrines of religion, though each might prefer to state his sentiment in his own way."

Immediately after there follows the principles of religion, and no amount of explaining can alter the fact that this is a *creed* in every sense of the term.

If they don't call it a creed, it is at any rate a "formulary distinctive" of the Congregational

Church, and as such is illegal under the Cowper-Temple Clause of the Acts of 1870—1902.

Principle I., or first article in the creed: "The Scriptures of the Old Testament, as received by the Jews, and the books of the New Testament as received by the primitive Church, Congregational Churches believe to be divinely inspired and of supreme authority. These writings, in the languages in which they were originally composed, are to be consulted, with the aids of sound criticism, as a final appeal to all controversies, *but the common version they consider to be adequate to the ordinary purposes of Christian instruction and edification.*"

Here it is laid down explicitly and clearly, and in the most positive terms, that the mere reading of the Bible they consider to be adequate to the ordinary purposes of Christian instruction, yet we are told that simple Bible reading is not sectarian Congregational teaching. Then follow nineteen other articles of belief, but they have no creed.

We must remember, however, in accordance with their explanations, that any person is at liberty to *reject any or all* of these articles if he thinks fit, but the one he cannot reject as a Congregationalist is the first, namely, that the reading of the common version of the Scripture "is adequate to the ordinary purposes of Christian instruction." If he denies that he ceases to be a Congregationalist. In other words, there is no escape from the conclusion that simple Bible reading is the sectarian Congregational formula in its most complete form.

But, following their creed, we find their principles

of Church order and discipline, and these simply emphasise the statement just made, and leave them no loophole for escape.

Principle or Article II. :—

“They believe that the New Testament contains, either in the form of express statute or in the example and practice of Apostles, or Apostolic men, all the articles of faith necessary to be believed, and all the principles of order and discipline requisite for constituting and governing Christian societies, and that human traditions, fathers and Councils, canons and creeds, possess no authority over the faith and practice of Christians.”

Article III. concludes: “*Their only appeal in all questions touching their religious faith and practice is to the sacred Scriptures.*”

Article IV. : “They believe that the New Testament authorises every Christian Church to stand independent of all authority, saving that only of the Supreme and Divine Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

These articles of faith and discipline must be read in the light of their explanatory notes, and their statement of the adequacy of Bible reading for “the ordinary purposes” of Christian instruction must be taken in connection with the fact that they reserve to everyone “the most perfect liberty of conscience.”

In an old volume of an *official* Congregational magazine I find the following :—

“The great principle of Dissenters is as simple as it is important. It is this: The Bible, and the Bible only, is their religion.”

This settles the question once for all.

As to the usual practice in the Council schools, proofs have been given in a previous chapter that the religious teaching in schools transferred from the Nonconformist denomination is "exactly what it was whilst they were in the hands of the denominations." This cannot be said of the schools transferred from the Church of England, and unfortunately, unless through some divine interposition, we shall have to say that it is not true in the schools to be stolen from the Catholic Church.

The Manchester syllabus of religious teaching has been very widely adopted throughout the country, and consists of texts, passages, and chapters to be read with suitable explanation by the teacher.

"Reynold's Newspaper" is no friend to the Catholic Church, but even here we find our education policy vindicated, though unintentionally, by Morris Davidson, who wrote October 5, 1902: "And not only in respect of the South African War have the Nonconformists demonstrated their recreancy to their own noblest traditions; they have equally departed from the bedrock of principle on this very question of education. The moment they agreed to recognise, in any form, *Biblical teaching in schools supported from rates and taxes they were lost, both morally and politically.* If Theology is to be established in the school, why on earth not in the Church? Of course, I am aware that it is pretended by advocates of the vaunted compromise effected in Board schools, that as there is no catechism taught there is no Theological instruction imparted. But I am an

ex-Scottish Dominie myself, in parish school, burgh school, and academy successively, and I know *that this is an impudent imposture, or at the best a positive delusion*. At every step the schoolmaster, if he is not a blockhead, is confronted by scores and scores of highly controversial problems. Catechisms are one and all anathema, but to launch any ordinary instructor of youth on the great ocean of Hebrew literature embodied in the Scriptures of the Old Testament and the New, without a chart of any kind, is to repose a confidence in the scholastic mind which is not warranted in one case in a hundred or more. Can the Bible be taught? Why is this so? Because never since the Bible became a text-book in schools was it so utterly impossible to impart to the impressionable mind of a child any definite idea of its contents, and ex hypothesi, as it were, these must be as definite as the multiplication table."

There is strong and unwilling testimony to the position taken up by Catholics, and the writer agrees with other impartial critics who maintain that the Council school teaching is identical with Nonconformist teaching.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FREE CHURCH CONSPIRACY AGAINST CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

It is clear from the evidence given in previous chapters that the aim of Nonconformists has been to capture the whole of the education rate to pay for the propagation of their own religious principles in the schools, and at the same time to make acceptance of their teaching a condition of benefiting by the rate, and the practice of any other religious teaching a disqualification. But they were not content with this. From 1870 to 1902 the whole of the rate was spent on their teaching, yet they tried even in 1870 to make it impossible for any other religious teaching to be given in the schools. Many attempts were made by their political leaders to force on the country universal Board schools, and to deprive voluntary schools even of Parliamentary grants, so as to destroy them altogether. It was an educational Hell or Connaught. Since 1902 their efforts have been even more determined, and they have lost no opportunity of improving their organisation ready for the next attack. In 1870 we had the individual politician, representing the Liberation Society, the Congregational Union, the Baptist Union, and the various Education Leagues, scattered throughout the country, and working to some extent independently. Now we have all these banded together in one vast political organisation, the most extensive and far-reaching that England has ever seen.

The older organisations were supposed to be merely defensive. The new one is intended to be aggressive. The methods of older societies and leagues were moral suasion, and the influencing of public men in Parliament, and outside, by public meetings, etc. The methods and aims of the new organisation are frankly and unmistakably political, and to be furthered by *selecting* and *financing* members of Parliament. It is the abuse of the ministerial office, carried to its furthest limit, the priest in politics *in excelsis*.

It is idle to pretend that even the older societies were either Christian or consistent, their actions and aims belied the professions of their constitution. They were established before education became a question of rates.

The two first objects of the Liberation Society are (1) The abrogation of all laws and usages which inflict disability or confer privilege upon ecclesiastical grounds. (2) The discontinuance of *all* payments from public funds, and of *all* compulsory exactions for *religious* purposes.

The object of the Baptist Union (established 1723): "To maintain the right of *all* men *everywhere* from disadvantage, restraint, and taxation in matters purely religious."

The action of these two bodies during the last forty years has been the very opposite of these professions, and shows clearly how religion has dropped out and been supplanted by politics.

The officials of the Liberation Society for 1907 included Mr. Lloyd George as a vice-president, and on the executive committee were found the names

of 27 Liberal members of Parliament, of whom a fairly large proportion have been honoured by the Liberal Government, nearly all being prominent anti-denominationalists. In addition, the local councils contain the names of 21 other Liberal members of Parliament, making 48 in all. Some years ago it occurred to one of the great Nonconformist "divines" that if they could organise and consolidate the Free Churchmen in all parts of the kingdom their political power would be enormously increased, and for this purpose the organisation called the Free Church Federation was established. In 1894 there were only 12 local councils, 130 in the following year, when the first report was submitted, whilst in 1906 there were about a thousand, and each of these was a centre of political activity in the interest of the Liberal party. It has been denied, and is denied still, that the organisation is political, but from their own reports it will be seen that it is quite as much a political organisation as the most pronounced Liberal Association. It will be equally clear that they are aiming at a domination over the liberties and consciences of the British people far exceeding the "dreadful" claims they are so fond of attributing to Rome, and that they seek to control in their own interests *every human relationship*, and to attain this end by political methods and by coercion. The objects are stated in their Year Book and include the following:—

"(a) To facilitate intercourse and co-operation among the Evangelical Free Churches.

"(d) To advocate the New Testament doctrine of

the Church, and to defend the rights of the associated churches.

“(e) To promote the application of the law of Christ in every relation of human life.”

In 1895 the first Federation report was presented at the annual Congress in Birmingham, and every year they have tried to perfect the political machinery so as to emulate the Temperance Society, whose secretary boasted “that a man in London had only to press a button, and at once a shoal of protests were sent up to the Government from every corner of the country.”

This is how public opinion is manufactured. One very striking feature about the Free Church caucus is that it is almost entirely financed by a very few individuals, as anyone may see by referring to their balance-sheets.

A conference was held in Newcastle in 1904, and the following resolution was passed:—“That no definitely denominational teaching or formulary be given or used in public schools during school hours, but simple Biblical instruction may be given according to a syllabus, as is general at present in provided schools; attendance at such instruction shall be subject to a conscience clause.”

By public schools they mean Catholic, Church, or Council. That is their educational policy, and has been their policy all along.

The report speaks of negotiations with the Board of Education, and says of the election fund that it started with a promise by Mr. Cadbury of £5,000, conditional on £20,000 being raised. W. P.

Hartley gave £2,500, W. H. Brown, £500, S. Cook £500, proprietors of the *Christian World* £250, so that these five persons were responsible for nearly £9,000.

“Dr. Townsend and Rev. T. Law have entered into negotiations with Free Churchmen all over the country, strongly urging them to stand as candidates, with the result that a large number have entered who would not otherwise have thought of taking such a course.”

“To assist the secretaries, a booklet was published by the Free Church Council, entitled, ‘Organising for the Elections.’”

In the report of 1905, under the heading “District Federations,” no less than 26 make special mention of interference in municipal and parliamentary elections, always on the Liberal side, and they boast of their successes in returning “progressive” candidates in the West Riding of Yorkshire (of evil notoriety in the persecution of our schools), Cambridge, Bristol, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Kent, Leicester, the Market Harboro’ parliamentary election, and other places.

THE EDUCATION CAMPAIGN.

“The year 1904 has been by no means a year of inactivity. The whole country had previously been roused, by-elections showed that public opinion was on our side, and the interval before the appeal to the country has been well employed; the work of preparation for the great battle has been going steadily forward, and the organisation has not only

been kept in readiness, but has been developed and strengthened all along the line. In addition to this work of quiet preparation we have constantly had to fight the Act of 1902 in its administration in various places."

"THE NEWCASTLE PROGRAMME."

"At the last annual council, a broad and comprehensive scheme for the future policy of the Free Churches in regard to an educational settlement was laid down. The position for which we are fighting was thus defined:—

"That the system of education shall recognise only *one type* of public elementary schools, viz., schools provided and controlled by the public education authority.

"That all schools maintained by public funds, whether by rates or taxes, shall be under the sole management and control of representatives appointed by the method of popular election.

"That there shall be adequate provision for the training of all teachers of public elementary schools free from theological and ecclesiastical tests, and under the sole management and control of the popularly elected education authorities.

"That no ecclesiastical or theological tests shall be applied in the appointment of teachers of publicly supported schools or training colleges.

"That no distinctly denominational teaching or formulary be given or used in school hours, but simple Biblical teaching may be given according to a syllabus, etc."

These resolutions, embodying the educational

policy, not only of the Free Church Councils, but of the present Liberal Government, are given at length, so that the reader may know what we have to expect from them.

It may also be pointed out that these have been public property for years, so that there is no excuse for any Catholic member of Parliament supporting the Nonconformist policy on the ground that it is fair and tolerant to Catholics. They say what they mean in the plainest possible terms, that leave neither room nor excuse for misunderstanding. In a paragraph on opposing voluntary schools we shall, perhaps, find the reason why Catholic schools have such a difficulty in getting justice. This paragraph is very illuminating as an instance of their methods:—

“Under the Act of 1902 it is still open for the Anglican and other religious bodies to provide voluntary schools as before. The policy of the National Council has been to urge that where a new school is required it should be provided by a public authority, and consequently *to recommend opposition to all proposals to provide schools from private sources*. A large number of such proposals have been made, and our friends have appealed to us for guidance in the matter. Both by letter and in personal interviews we have pointed out the lines to be taken in opposing such proposals. *In consequence of our action the Board of Education have frequently held local enquiries, and in almost all cases have reported against the proposed sectarian schools*. In some cases the result has been the abandonment of the proposal before enquiry.”

"This is not work in which the Free Church Council has bulked large in the public eye, as we have very rarely intervened directly, generally contenting ourselves with assisting the local opposition, but it is work in which we have been able to render great public service."

This paragraph helps to explain the many cases in which Church schools have been closed or transferred since 1902, and in face of such persistent and relentless opposition as we find in this paragraph, there was a great temptation to give way, since it was only exchanging one form of Protestant teaching for another. Catholics have been subjected to the same persecution, and they are even more bitter against our schools than against those of the Church of England.

"The Cheshire federation, during the year (1911) has actively championed the Free Church cause, by taking decisive steps in opposition to the proposed new Roman Catholic schools at Ellesmere Port and Whitby, on the ground that sufficient provision has already been made for the Roman Catholic children of the district in the Council schools. . . . Though the Federation's efforts in this case proved fruitless, they will probably act as a deterrent to any action of an anti-Protestant character that may be contemplated in the future." (Report 1912, p. 228.)

On p. 177 (1905) we find "that pressure has been brought to bear by the National Council on many prominent Free Churchmen, who, in the ordinary way, would not have undertaken to contest seats, and they were introduced to suitable constituencies. It

was found that many excellent candidates were unable to bear personally the whole of the cost of contesting a seat. Accordingly, in not a few cases, we have been able to grant from the Free Church Election Fund some financial assistance to Free Church candidates."

Elsewhere they boast that the campaign of calumny against the Act of 1903 had been carried into every village and hamlet, and that the 900 Free Church secretaries had acted as a kind of Liberal election agents in the contest of 1906.

The report for 1906 is also very interesting as showing the development. Here is an extract:—

"The Council confidently counts on the introduction of a measure on a basis in accordance with the resolutions adopted in 1904 and 1905."

"Mr. Lloyd George had said 1870 is impossible. He has repeatedly emphasised that the compromise of that time is impossible now. We have a Cabinet pledged to educational reform. The Labour Party is pledged on lines harmonious with ours. We have 200 Free Churchmen in the House."—Dr. Clifford, in moving education resolution, which was carried unanimously (at Birmingham).

The difficulty is not to find evidence of this widespread conspiracy, but to decide what to omit.

The Year Book for 1906 gives an explanatory appendix to the resolutions annually passed by the Council assembled in Congress, with about 2,000 delegates from all parts. These resolutions strongly emphasise the anti-Catholic character of the opposition.

Section 7, Resolution I.: "*That we cannot on any account admit the principle that the churches have the right to give, or the parents have the right to demand any denominational teaching whatever, in connection with school life.*"

"That the entry of sectarian teachers into State schools and colleges during the hours allotted for State work should be *absolutely forbidden.*"

"*That the non-provided schools must either be transferred to the State, or maintained by the denominations as denominational schools, for as State schools they must cease, and no arrangement for sectarian teaching shall have any place whatever in the State system.*"

"*That in case public school buildings are used for denominational teaching to the children attending outside school hours, a payment should be made by the denomination so using the buildings to cover expenses.*"

Such are the arrogant demands of a *minority* of the public.

That is, in the schools we have helped to build, their teaching must be given by the State teacher at our cost, yet if we use the buildings outside school hours we must make a third payment for the privilege. One quotation more will conclude this chapter. This is the declaration of policy made on behalf of the Government by Mr. Runciman on April 27th, 1909.

The occasion was Dr. Clifford's ministerial jubilee, at the Holborn Restaurant, when the "Dr." was

compared to John Knox. I would ask all Catholics to take these words to heart:—

“Mr. Runciman, supporting the toast, said he was present not as representing the Baptist Union, or any other Nonconformist body, but as representing the State. On behalf of the State he recognised Dr. Clifford as a great citizen, and when he used that word he was reminded of a subject with which he was not unconnected, pleading the cause of equality, not in the name of a religious denomination, but in the name of the citizens. What John Knox was to Scotland Dr. Clifford was to England. There had been no public movement worth pushing that had not had the support of Dr. Clifford. As to education, Sir G. White had said that in their most depressed days Dr. Clifford was most optimistic. They required encouragement just now. They had been repulsed, not defeated. Dr. Clifford had never yet acknowledged defeat, and one of the things which encouraged those of them who were inclined to be played out was that Dr. Clifford’s unswerving hope always inspired them to further efforts. Dr. Clifford was not prepared to lay down the sword, and where he led they (the State) were prepared to follow.”

Let Catholics read and ponder these words.

CHAPTER XV.

“ NO TESTS FOR TEACHERS.”

The fifth resolution of the Free Church Newcastle programme makes the impossible demand of “No tests for teachers,” but gives no definition of the meaning of a test.

The absurdity and inconsistency of the claim is shown by the fact that the next resolution insists on a religious test being imposed not only upon every teacher appointed, but upon every child admitted to a school. Only “one type of school is to be recognised,” “denominational teaching is *not* to be given,” but “Bible reading according to a syllabus *may* be given,” and the teachers are to be appointed subject to these two conditions. And we are told that there are no tests in Council schools governed by these conditions. Whether a teacher is appointed because of his willingness to give Church teaching, or because he agrees not to give it, is immaterial, the test is there in both cases, and cannot be got rid of.

First of all, what is a religious test, which up to now has not been defined by Nonconformists? Any restriction upon the freedom of any teacher in any religious question is a religious test. Strictly speaking, even the abolition of religious teaching would not do away with tests, because the religious freedom of the teacher would be restricted, and that is in itself a test.

Nonconformists do not desire freedom of religious teaching in the schools, therefore they impose a test of their own devising. Their usual interpretation is, that a condition which keeps a Nonconformist as such out of a Church school is a religious test, whilst a similar condition keeping a Churchman out of the Council school is “local popular control,” though neither the locality nor the people have any say in the matter. Not only Nonconformists generally hold this peculiar and one-sided view of a religious test, but it is shared by the Government and has been a feature of all their attempts at legislation. The most striking instance of this unfair discrimination in favour of the Nonconformist sectarian test was given by Mr. McKenna (in March, 1907), when he stated that “it is not intended that the local education authority shall demand the repayment of the one-fifteenth of the teachers’ salaries” (deducted for religious teaching in non-provided schools) “in the case of a (Nonconformist) British school where the religious teaching is entirely ‘undenominational,’ and given wholly by the teachers, and the management is also ‘undenominational.’”

The teachers of these Nonconformist schools are appointed subject to a sectarian test, and are privately controlled and on exactly the same footing before the law as Church schools.

Still more recently, Mr. Pease, speaking at Rotherham (in November, 1913), said that it was their intention to convey the Nonconformist children to Nonconformist teaching schools at the public cost, where it was not possible to bring the schools to the

children. In answer to a correspondent, he said that it was not their intention to make similar provision for Catholic children who were compelled to attend Protestant Council schools; "in the view of His Majesty's Government the exclusion of denominational education is not a proper object for expenditure out of public funds."

So that they have one law for the Nonconformist and another for the Churchman and Catholic.

The two impossibilities in education are the abolition of religious tests, and "unsectarian" religious teaching. Not only religious tests, but sectarian tests are inevitable if religious teaching is given at all. No matter what name is given to it, any condition or regulation which shuts out of any school the religious teaching of any section of the people is a sectarian religious test.

During the discussion on Mr. Birrell's Bill in 1906 every possible attempt was made to explain away the difficulty, but it was found impossible to do so.

There is another aspect of the religious test: and a most important one. Nonconformists claim that because Churchmen as citizens may be appointed teachers in the schools provided by the community, nominally for all the children of the community, subject always to the operation of the Cowper-Temple test for teacher and child; they should have the right *as Nonconformists* to be appointed teachers in the schools built by Churchmen for the education of the children of Churchmen in the tenets of the Church of England. There is no comparison. By virtue of

their public provision any teacher has an equal right to appointment to a Council school. Also any teacher—Catholic, Churchman or Nonconformist—is equally competent to give the kind of religious teaching commonly given, and the only kind permitted by the test in those schools. It is simply a question of wearing a Nonconformist muzzle and omitting Catholic and Church interpretation.

Nonconformist teaching is secured by the exclusion of denominational teaching and atmosphere, or surroundings. But the non-provided school is different. It is built for a special purpose, and the Nonconformist teacher, even if willing, is not competent to give the religious teaching desired by the parents who use the school; and the only way to secure the right of the Church parent to that instruction which he considers adequate for his children is by giving him the *selection* of the teacher. The Nonconformist gets the same result by a different (exclusion) test, but all the same by a sectarian religious test which cannot be eliminated from our educational system so long as the country is made up of different denominations, so long as religious teaching is given, but above all so long as there is any pretence of religious equality in our educational system.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BILL OF 1906.

The Education Bill of 1906 was the greatest crime ever perpetrated by the English House of Commons, a crime against God and Man, and for which the only excuse of the assembly as a whole is the one urged by Jesus dying on the cross, "They know not what they do."

Even now, eight years after the introduction of that infamous measure, the country is ignorant of what was then attempted, and what will again be not only attempted but consummated unless the Catholics of England rise in the might of a just and intelligent revolt against the worst persecution they have ever been called on to endure.

These are strong words, but I would they were ten times as strong so as to rouse people from the lethargy that has overtaken them, and to induce them to study the happenings of the last eight years, since only by a careful and close study of these can we avert the disaster that hangs over our schools.

We look upon the Reformation of the sixteenth century as the greatest blow the Church in England has ever suffered.

The House of Lords saved us from a worse fate in 1906.

In the sixteenth century the persecution was cruel and bloodthirsty, but it was confined largely to the

well-to-do, and the faith was kept alive, and Mass was celebrated here and there during the darkest times by the heroic band of missionary priests educated in the English Colleges at Douay and Rheims, who risked and sacrificed their lives for their fellow countrymen. The poorer people were left comparatively unmolested, and could hand down the faith to their children in their own homes without outside interference.

They were, of course, deprived of Mass and the Sacraments except upon very rare occasions, but the very nature of the persecution defeated its object, and the Church again reared up her head and spread throughout the country. The Government of the time touched individually only those in the higher walks of life. The conditions to-day are so different that the meanest inhabitant of the most obscure slum, or the most remote and inaccessible part of the country, is touched by the law and cannot escape its administration in civil matters, such as rating and taxation, with all that it implies. The schools are financed by (1) *taxes*, (2) *rates*. The only person contributing nothing to the public *taxes* is the babe at the mother's breast. Every other person—man, woman, or child, rich or poor, strong or weak—contributes his quota to the fund from which the Parliamentary grants are paid, and, therefore, becomes one of the great "public." There is no escape for any single individual. The dirtiest slum child, spending his stray farthing in sweets, pays his share, the most drunken wastrel contributes a fair proportion. The doddering crone, with every sip of

her up of tea, with or without sugar, every pinch of snuff, or pull at her black clay pipe, and the school boy, with his smuggled cigarette, pay equally with the most "respectable" citizen, *because they consume articles that pay a tax to the King's revenue*. Probably the poorer class pay more in proportion in indirect taxation than their better-off neighbours. In the same way the poorest inhabitant of our towns or villages helps to pay the *rates*. The meanest hovel for which rent is paid is also *rated* for the support of the schools. Even the lodger who helps the actual tenant to live in a larger house, or the working boy or girl whose earnings make it possible to pay a higher rent for the family dwelling, all these help to pay the *local rate*, so that there is no means of evading the tax for educational purposes.

In the same way, during the last forty years, every child of school age in Great Britain is brought within the scope of the educational legislation passed by the Government. If the law is *just* he is the first to benefit; if *unjust* he is the *first to suffer*. Any attempt to interfere with the just administration of the law, any attempt to curtail or impose disability of any kind in the sharing of the funds to which all contribute equally, *falls first and heaviest on the child*. That was not the case in the sixteenth century, but to-day it is one of the results of our highly organised Government and far-reaching system of taxation and rating. We are horrified at the persecution now going on in France, where the name of God is blotted out from the text books in the schools, but we look on with folded hands and a

tolerant smile whilst the cockle is being mingled with the wheat that is to form the spiritual food of our children. Nay, we approve of the attempts to make the cockle the sole food of our children, whilst the wheat is reserved for our neighbours.

The faith in England is at this moment in greater danger than the faith in France. Open and avowed persecution can be seen by the least observant and fought by all. Secret and insidious persecution, such as we are suffering to-day, is only apparent to the particularly observant Catholic, or to those who are actually touched by the injustice. It is carried on under all kinds of hypocritical pretexts, and has not yet been brought home to the man in the street. But it is close at hand, and even our own people have thrown open the gates and bid it enter.

For over two centuries we have been engaged in building up a system of denominational schools under the encouragement and latterly the compulsion, of the State.

We have spent millions of money, and made untold sacrifices to educate our children in the faith. Who can say how many parish priests have been cut off in their prime largely through the work and worry of keeping the day schools efficient?

Yet in one night the work of two centuries was swept away by four lines on a printed sheet of paper, without a solitary no from the "defenders of our schools."

We had been told over and over again that we should be treated justly, and that "no man's conscience should be hurt." Deputation after deputa-

tion had been assured that the new measure would be based upon religious equality and justice, yet upon April 9th, 1906, Mr. Birrell stood up in the House of Commons and coolly announced the extermination of the voluntary schools without a protest from anyone, with the brutal gibe that "minorities must suffer, it is the badge of their tribe." He stood upon the Government benches and impudently stated that *after the first of January, 1908, the teaching of Christianity must automatically cease in the schools, that the clock must be put back seventy-eight years, and Catholics and Churchmen go back under the penal laws; that they were not fit to enjoy the rights and duties of citizens, that their children were to lose all the benefits of the rate, and that their only rights were to pay for the privileges to be conferred upon the Methodist, and the Baptist, and the Congregationalist. He announced that the Catechism, the crucifix, and the statues of the saints were to be thrown out of the Catholic schools and placed in the lumber-room to make way for the Protestant Bible, and the lion and unicorn instead of the sacred pictures. That the door of the school he had collected the pennies to build was to be shut against the priest, who was to be no more welcome to speak to Catholic children than the most ignorant Methodist preacher.* In the words of Mr. Lloyd George, "The Bible inside and the priest outside was the ideal of the Bill." *And Catholic members sat dumb.* He announced that a teacher may secretly have the unbelief of a Julian or the vices of a Nero, but if he could teach mathematics or history he must be

allowed to teach the Bible to Catholic children of five years old. An infant school teacher, armed with the authority of the County Council might deny the creation, and tell the children that they were descended from frogs, and Mr. Birrell considered that the opportunity of teaching once a week in the Sunday school that God made them was sufficient antidote to the infidel teaching they received on ten half-day during the week, backed up with all the authority of the County Council and School Board officer, who have supplanted the parent in the control of the children. But to sum up the matter once for all, a unanimous vote of the Northern Counties Education League at Liverpool on November 19th, 1909, singled out Ferrer as the ideal type of a teacher for Catholic children. A report of this resolution may be seen in the *Liverpool Daily Post*." And this is one of the societies that dictates the educational policy of the Government, and that Mr. Runciman pledged the Government to follow until they choose to lay down the sword.

Now for proof of the foregoing statements. We will take the Bill itself, a Bill that neither the Government nor the Liberal Party understood. My first copy was sent by Mr. W. Runciman in reply to a question as to the interpretation of one of the clauses. Mr. Birrell gave one interpretation; Mr. Runciman, at the Reform Club in Manchester, gave another. I wrote asking which was correct, and Mr. Runciman sent me the Bill to prove that its author, didn't understand it, but that he did. The first clause

is short, sharp, and decisive, like the stroke of a guillotine. Here it is: "On and after the first day of January, 1908, a school shall not be recognised as a public elementary school unless it is a school provided by the local education authority."

It doesn't look very alarming, but it is a death warrant. It doesn't say much, but the meaning of what it does say, and still more of what is implied in the last eleven words, is simply devilish. The House of Commons didn't understand it. The country didn't understand it. But what could be plainer? The unthinkable had happened, every pledge of justice and equality given to political and religious opponents was shamelessly and ruthlessly broken. They were not simply persecuted, they were blotted out of existence; 15,000 denominational schools were wiped out with a single dip of ink.

To make the meaning still more clear, Mr. Birrell, in the first reading speech, dotted the *r*'s and crossed all the *t*'s most carefully. Yet even that didn't bring understanding. The morning papers of April 10th gloated over the 'downfall of the denominational schools, and still they would not understand. Explaining the first clause to the House, Mr. Birrell said it means that "*on and after the date named no elementary school shall receive a single penny of public money, either from rates or taxes, unless it becomes a provided school within the meaning of the Act.* Unless electoral pledges and speeches are all fudge and fustian, unless, indeed, they are sound and fury, signifying nothing, no other clause than this was possible. (Cheers.) *It does not fall*

short of our pledge; it does not go beyond it; it is our pledge—(cheers),—and it carries also with it the second pledge in relation to tests for teachers. . . . The first clause carries with it certain definite consequences. Every elementary school on receiving rates and grants becomes at once on so doing a provided school within the meaning of the Education Act, and consequently it will receive the same kind of religious instruction as is now being given in the provided schools of the country—(laughter),—subject, of course, to the famous condition that no Catechism or religious formulary distinctive of any denomination shall be taught in the school, and subject also to a conscience clause. That will be the general rule throughout the land.” (Cheers.)

Could anything be plainer?

On and after the first day of January, 1908, every Catholic school either became a Council school or the Catholics would have to pay the whole cost of their own school, and pay the ordinary rate, in addition to paying for new Council schools to accommodate all the Catholic children, for whom room must be found, whether they used it or not. The same applied to Church schools.

Further, if the managers wouldn't transfer it under clause 2, the local education authority could confiscate the school from January 1st, 1908, to January 1st, 1909, under clause 10; and if the trustees and managers tried to close the school between the passing of the Act and its coming into operation on January 1st, 1908, the local authority could also confiscate the schools under clause 11.

Again, under clause 8, supposing the managers wished to carry on the school as a certified efficient school, that is as a school entirely supported by the parents of the children, and without either grant or rates, that offer could not be entertained unless the Board of Education were satisfied that the school could be effectively carried on for at least five years.

By sub-section (b) of section 2 of the same clause the Board of Education had full power to take any school and carry it on as a provided or Council school, subject to any payment decided upon by the Commissioners to be appointed under clause 9, whose decisions were to have the same force as an Act of Parliament—clause 8 (3)—and who were to be placed beyond the reach or jurisdiction of any Court of Law. (4) The same immunity was given to “every trustee and other person who acts under any order or *in accordance with any opinion or advice* given by the Board of Education as to the administration of or otherwise *in relation to any educational endowment.*”

That is, that no redress could be obtained in any Court of Law against *any person at all acting in accordance with opinion or upon the advice of the Board of Education.*

Almost every educational institution in the land was placed entirely at the mercy of the Board of Education, with no appeal to the Courts of Law, no matter what injustices might be committed, and this was done in the name of justice and religious equality by a “democratic” Government.

I find from the *Catholic Times* of May 4th, 1906, that Mr. Augustine Watts, of Liverpool, not only

confirms my statements as to the absolutely despotic power given under the Bill to close every denominational school, but he also points out that, in addition to the power to confiscate any premises to carry on a school, *they had also power to seize and dispose of any buildings, and apply the proceeds in any way they thought fit, so long as they were devoted to educational purposes*, and it rested with them to define all such terms, with no appeal to the law for redress or protection.

In his reply to the criticisms, *Mr. Birrell admitted that the first part of the Bill was open to the imputation that it was not an Education Bill, but defended the confiscatory proposals of the second and third parts on the ground that they would redeem it and make it an Education Bill.*

The morning papers of April 10th left no doubt as to the nature and effect of the Bill. The *Manchester Guardian* came out with staring headlines, "Dual System to be Ended," "All Council Schools"; and in giving an outline of the provisions said: "One Type of school. The great feature of the Bill is the abolition of the dual system. Briefly, the new Bill abolishes the non-provided or voluntary school, and with the school, of course, goes the present dual machinery for its management."

In a leading article it said: "The Education Bill is a large, a thorough, and tolerant (?) measure. . . . In all schools not only will the secular teaching be controlled by the local authority, but also the religious teaching, so far as it is given within school hours, and the whole of the teachers will be appointed by it."

In all this not a word is said about the injustice done to the denominationalist. All the vapouring of the Passive Resister about the iniquity of compelling a man to pay for teaching he cannot accept has vanished into thin air in face of the abject surrender by the Government of the liberties of the people into the hand of Dr. Clifford. The Bill was really drafted in the inner cabinet of the Free Church Councils, and exactly follows their extreme demands. The Bill, as printed, consists of 25 pages, but the real Bill is contained in the first four lines given above, forming clause 1. The other clauses mentioned were inserted so that no school should have a chance of escape. These provisions were such open persecution of their opponents that it was necessary to throw dust in the eyes of the House of Commons and the country, and for this purpose they introduced two other clauses not worth the paper they were written on, and one which they knew had broken down in practice. Clause 3 provided that in certain of the captured schools it was made a condition of the transfer on not more than two mornings a week the owners of the school might send in outside teachers to give religious teaching to their own children, "no part of the expense of this teaching to be paid by the local education authority."

Under the dictum of the Free Church Councils, given in chapter 14, it is not unlikely that the parents would even have to pay for the privilege of going into their own schools to teach their own children. They were paying the same rate as the Nonconformist, who got their teaching paid for from rates. Clause 4 provided that on certain conditions, if the parents of

a certain proportion, four-fifths of the children, desired to have special religious teaching it might be given, *but not at the cost of the rates*, and, if the local authority thought fit, it might even be given by the teachers attached to the school. This clause was intended to meet the objections of Catholics, and was a very big red herring, which during the debates was transformed into a white elephant of the finest and largest type known to naturalists.

As drafted, the clause was optional. They "may," if they were satisfied, they "may if they think fit," permit the ordinary teaching staff to give the religious teaching, *but the parents must pay for it as an extra.*

Here we have very different treatment for the Non-conformist and the Catholic or Churchman.

By clause 1 every Catholic school and every Church school ceased to exist and became a Council school, managed by the Council, controlled by the Council, and the teachers appointed by the Council, who were not allowed to ask any question as to the religion of those who were to be employed to teach Catholic children. The Catechism and Crucifix would be thrown out and replaced by the Protestant Bible. The clergy and nuns would be put outside, and there wouldn't be a single Catholic school or Church school throughout the whole of England and Wales. "All Council schools."

In these schools the Protestant Bible teaching of the Baptist and the Methodist would be given to our children by the school staff, and paid for out of the rates just as it is in the Council schools. That we

won't have at any price. And we could not close or keep our schools. If we didn't give them up the Council were given power to take them by force, putting in bailiffs and breaking them open. At the same time, the Board of Education had absolute power to sell, and spend the price of any Catholic educational institution, and we had no remedy.

But if we wanted the Catechism taught on two mornings a week in the Council schools *we must pay, and send in our own special teachers. On the other three mornings and five afternoons our children would get the Protestant Bible teaching given by any kind of teachers, and paid for out of the rates.* In the towns, where four out of five of the children were Catholics, and if the parents went to Councils and petitioned for it, and were willing to pay for it, and took the trouble to go to the polling booth and vote specially, *also if the father was working and couldn't vote for it, he would be counted as having voted against it,* we might have Catholic teaching every day, *just as long as the Board of Education thought fit.* During the debate in Committee the optional "may" was changed into "shall," parents' committees were to have the privilege of a voice in the *nomination* of the teacher, and a few other trifling concessions were made that had to be paid for in hard cash, but the main thing was altogether ignored. *The school still remained a Council school under clause 1. The Catholic and Churchman was deprived of his right as a citizen and a ratepayer, the school was not a Catholic or Church school in any sense at all, and the Catholic and Churchman had to pay*

specially, and as an extra, for religious teaching that was given to the Nonconformist and paid for out of the rates. And (1) any Council in the country *could put an end to this at any time by merely altering the proportion of children in the school*; (2) at any time the Board of Education could quash the arrangement at discretion; (3) and, most important, if the Catholics and Churchmen were unable to pay the heavy fine so lightly piled up by the "saviours of the Catholic schools" the whole arrangement fell through, and every school became an ordinary Council school once for all, and every pretence of Catholic or Church teaching was abolished. The arrangement in any case couldn't have lasted six months.

To find what it would cost any parish in the country take the cost of maintenance of the school, calculate the proportion of time spent in religious teaching, and you have the penalty Catholics and Churchmen would have to pay. Thus, supposing that maintenance cost £500 a year, and one hour out of five was spent in religious teaching, the parents, in addition to paying the rate out of which the school was supported, would have to pay back to the County Council the sum of £100 a year for what was given to the Methodist for nothing. The annual cost, at the lowest estimation, for Catholic schools in Manchester would have been, in 1906, £6,000, and this would have gone up every year. This was one thing that was altogether overlooked, and many experts thought that we might make some arrangement with the teachers that would

enable us to carry on the schools. One of these, a school manager, whose name is a household word in Catholic matters, replying to the argument I have just given, said that the Councils would pay the teachers for the secular work, and we "might make some arrangement with them to give the religious teaching for a small payment." But any such arrangement would be prohibited by clause 7, which says that "A teacher . . . shall not give any special religious instruction . . . *except where permitted* to do so by the local education authority in cases where extended facilities are so afforded."

We may be quite certain that under the Act no such arrangement would have been allowed, since it would be clearly a violation of the clause to make any arrangement behind the backs of the committee, and also it was stated that the Councils would pay the teachers full time salaries, and the managers must refund the portion to the Councils. Ever since the Bill was destroyed by the House of Lords the *Catholic Herald* has advocated it as a satisfactory settlement. Here is the opinion of the same journal on June 29th, 1906:—

CLAUSE 4 PASSED.

THE GOVERNMENT PROVES UNYIELDING.

"It might seem, and is often said, that it matters little to Catholics what a Protestant Government may do. We are in any case a minority, and what particular form the misunderstanding or tyranny may take is sometimes regarded as being of little consequence to us. But no one could have sat in the

House of Commons without bitterly deploring the sudden estrangement between the Cabinet and the forces of Catholic democracy. *Practically the whole Catholic body—certainly nine-tenths of it—voted Radical in the last election. Not Liberal, but Radical, and what is more important than the numerical value of the vote was its valuation of conviction.*”

“For the Catholic Radical vote was convinced to the core; it hated the South African war, it hated the financial influences under which the Tory Government had fallen; it hated the landlord system in England only one degree less than it hated it in Ireland, and in connection with the latter country it ardently expected—whether the vote was cast by an Englishman or an Irishman—that justice would be done to the most tenacious Catholic race of Europe.

“The upshot of the whole matter is that *the Cabinet has refused to do elementary justice to the Catholic schools.* They have yielded here, as they have yielded in the South African war, to the power of the purse.” (Parliamentary Correspondent.)

The leading article on the same page is headed “War.” “*It looks as if Catholics would be compelled to take up arms against the Education Bill, which may shortly become an Act.* . . . If the Bill subjects us to the injustice which many Catholics assert it will entail, the Liberal Government and the Liberal Party will find themselves face to face with a situation that will mean the beginning of the end of Liberal domination.

“We have appealed to the sense of justice of our

neighbours, and that sense of justice seems wanting. Very well. Dr. Clifford and his friends have done something to show how Passive Resistance can be worked. It will be our business to better that resistance tenfold. We shall make a fight on this education business for liberty of conscience and fair play compared with which the Nonconformist resistance will appear as hollow mockery."

This is the journal which for the last seven years has defended and palliated every act of persecution the Government has perpetrated. The Bill passed the Commons and was rejected by the Lords. In the House of Lords the Government promised certain "concessions" on clause 4 that were really worthless, and the Irish party voted for the Bill as against the House of Lords. The Bill, in its last stage as accepted by the Irish party, and as defended by them for four years, was not a bit better than the Bill as introduced.

Here is the reason.

Clause 1.—"No school shall be recognised as a public elementary school . . . unless it is provided by the local education authority."

This was passed without alteration or amendment.

Clause 3 provided for special religious teaching in the confiscated schools "on not more than two mornings a week," on the express condition "that no part of the expense shall be paid by the local education authority."

Clause 4 provided that in certain districts, and under certain conditions, this special teaching might

replace the Cowper-Temple teaching, but again, *not at the expense of the authority.*

The whole of the Bill is really comprised in these three provisions, which were neither disputed nor amended by the House of Commons.

Clause 1 converted, not a certain proportion of our schools, *but every single Catholic and Church school, into a Council school. We hadn't even the odd one.* According to Mr. Birrell, only as a Council school could any school receive either rates or taxes. Clause 3 dealt with facilities in Council schools confiscated from Catholics and Churchmen. In these schools Nonconformist teaching would be given eight times a week by the school staff, and at the cost of the rates. Not more than twice a week—it doesn't even say twice a week—Catholics might send teachers into their own school (now a Council and not a Catholic school), and pay the cost of the time spent on Catholic teaching.

Clause 4 provided that if a certain proportion of the children were Catholics, Catholic teaching might be given every day. Again, Catholics to pay the whole of the cost. So that the governing clauses of the whole Bill said that only Council schools were to be supported out of rates and taxes, and not a single penny of either was to be paid for Catholic or Anglican teaching. I hope this is clear, since it is of the utmost importance.

Now to make it still more explicit. In reply to a question by Mr. Bridgeman on July 3rd, 1906 (Authorised Report, col. 1,629—30), Mr. Birrell said that a clause 4 school “*would not be a public elemen-*

tary school," and, therefore, would not receive either rates or taxes.

Speaking at Mr. Devlin's banquet in Belfast in February (1909?), Mr. T. P. O'Connor boasted that the Irish party "had wrung from the strongest Non-conformist Government of modern times every right and every privilege and every penny of public money for the Catholic school that was given to any other school."

Getting no reply from Mr. O'Connor to two letters, asking if he were correctly reported, I wrote to Lord Crewe, the Minister in charge of the Bill in the House of Lords. He replied "*that Mr. O'Connor must have meant something else, since the Bill, as introduced, provided that no part of the cost of the special religious teaching was to be paid out of the rates, and this was not amended in its passage through the House of Commons.*"

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CATHOLIC DELUSION IN 1906.

WHAT THE BILL REALLY DID AND WHAT WE THOUGHT IT DID.

The most amazing feature of the crisis of 1906 was the failure of the country to grasp the real significance of the first clause of the Bill. Not only the denominationalists, but, unless there was a very deep conspiracy indeed, the Nonconformists equally failed to realise that it meant the annihilation of the denominational schools. By the provisions of the Act of 1902 every ratepayer contributed directly to the rates spent on the maintenance of the schools, whilst from the first grant made by Parliament in 1883 down to 1906 all classes contributed something to the taxes from which grants were paid to all schools alike. Under the first clause, not only the rates, which had been available for the maintenance of the denominational schools under the Act of 1902, but even the Parliamentary grant which they had received for seventy-three years was taken away, and "not one single penny of either rates or taxes" would be paid to any voluntary school, which, under the new conditions, could only exist as "a certified efficient school," that is, a school entirely maintained from private sources. Still, every person was rated and taxed just the same for the Council schools. This delusion forms one of the most remarkable chapters in the history of education. The "facilities"

clauses (3 and 4) attracted all the attention, and whilst they were fiercely denounced by Nonconformists all over the country, the chief aim of the supporters of the voluntary schools was to make them as comprehensive and universal as possible.

The Nonconformist societies held meetings denouncing clause 4, and their representatives interviewed the Government, but in vain; it was left in the Bill. In fact, it was too valuable as a decoy to leave it out.

A meeting of malcontent Liberal members was addressed by Mr. Lloyd George, and he then made use of the very significant words that the "settlement" would prove much more drastic than it would appear from a mere scrutiny of its clauses. That statement was the inspiration of this article, and all I have written on the Bill.

Mr. Belloc described the Bill as a "just" and fair settlement, and, in reply to criticism, took up the astonishing position that there was no injustice in compelling the Anglican to give up his schools and accept the religious standard of Dr. Clifford, since both were Protestant, and it was no business of ours to do justice to them. The Nationalist members, though in some of their speeches there was a hazy notion that Catholics would suffer some financial disadvantage under the Bill, made no attempt to protest against the wiping out of the Catholic schools, and the taxing of Catholics for a universal Council school system, with Nonconformist Bible teaching replacing the Catechism in schools heretofore Catholic. There was some wild talk of closing the

schools and letting the children run loose, but that was simply folly. We must hold on to our Catholic schools at any cost, and give them no pretext for stopping the grant. The Catholics of Low Valley have had a bitter experience of being thrust off the grant list, but to put ourselves off the list by a policy of sheer madness would indeed be a sorry spectacle for the multitude, and compass the utter destruction of our schools. A great deal was said in 1902 and 1906 about a "mandate," as though there was something sacred about the word. It was spoken almost with awe, as if it possessed some magical quality never before heard of. Like all other terms used in this controversy, it has been prostituted to the basest party ends. It was said that in 1902 Mr. Balfour had no mandate to bring in his Bill giving a share of the rates to the voluntary schools, and that the Government of 1906 had a "mandate" to destroy the voluntary schools. Both statements are untrue, the latter particularly, and in more senses than one.

The first mandate of any Government, no matter what the general predilection of the voter may be, is the good government of the country as a whole. Government of the people, for the people, by the people is the Radical shibboleth, and in its highest sense is the ideal government. Primarily, every voter aims at that, though his interpretation of it may hardly be consistent.

But until it can be proved that the Act of 1902 is unjust in its incidence upon any section it is essentially good government, and, therefore, the Government had a mandate to bring in the Bill. No

majority and no mandate can justify a Government in bringing in and passing an unjust measure of any kind. So far as the Liberal party in 1906 had any mandate at all in educational matters, it was to amend the Act of 1902 by "removing its injustices." So far as they had such a mandate from any section of the people, that mandate lapsed for the want of an object. There were no injustices to remove. Again, so far as they had a mandate even from a section of the people, that mandate was obtained by fraud and misrepresentation, and the distortion and suppression of facts material to the case. So that, again, and in another sense, the mandate was invalid.

But they were returned largely upon Home Rule, Free Trade, and Chinese Labour, and many people supported them at the election on the strength of pledges that any educational settlement would be just and injure no man's conscience. The Catholic vote was also given on the assurance of protection by the Nationalists. The Catholic Church teaches that any pledge to do anything unjust and unlawful (that is morally unlawful) is invalid, yet a surprisingly large number of Catholics defended the action of the Government on the ground that it was the will of the majority, and argued that the majority must have its way.

A clear mandate on any one question is impossible in the present state of political life, but here were half-a-dozen important questions each appealing to a large section of the people, and each contributing to the colossal majority of the Government; and on the strength of such support they proposed to carry the

sword of persecution into every home. *The Catholics who voted on Home Rule had the pleasure of being told that they had voted for the destruction of their schools, as they have been told since 1910 that they knew perfectly well that in voting against the House of Lords they were voting not only for Home Rule, but for all the Government programme, including anti-Catholic legislation for the schools.*

The only consistent and logical position for the Catholic to take is that every measure must be treated on its merits, and if we consent to, or acquiesce in, any injustice to others simply because it doesn't affect us, not only are we betraying Catholic principles, but sooner or later we shall pay the penalty for our conduct.

From the highest motives in the first place, and for our own sakes in the second, we should take the logical position and oppose any injustice to any section, but we must first assure ourselves that the injustice is real and not imaginary. This is a case in which honesty is the best policy. Unfortunately upon this question many Catholics, and notably the great majority of those in Parliament, have ranged themselves on the side of the oppressor for the sake of material advantages, and we shall have to pay the price of their action.

This inability to separate abstract justice from political interest was the chief cause of the Catholic failure in 1906.

The majority of our public men were willing to agree to an injustice to the Church of England, at the cost of definite Christian teaching, if only a large

number of Catholic schools could be saved from the sacrifice; and this attitude helped to blind them to the real danger to ourselves.

The only way to deal with any measure affecting our schools is to treat it from the basis of the utmost injury that could be worked by hostile or harsh administration. We must trust nothing to good feeling or generosity. We must have our rights put down in black and white, and by statute.

But in 1906 our leaders paid far more attention to the unofficial promises than to the text of the Bill, and also ignored the clause in the Acts governing the Council school religious teaching. During the debates many protests were made and many meetings were held, but I do not remember a single protest on the ground that by the first clause our schools were wiped out of existence altogether. After that nothing mattered. There were calculations as to the number of "Catholic schools" that would be destroyed, how many Catholic schools came under the clause 3 arrangement, but, above all, how many "Catholic schools" could be secured under clause 4.

From every quarter the cry went up, "Catholic schools for Catholic children, under Catholic management and control," but from no quarter was this coupled with any real demand for the most important principle, "equal financial treatment," without which the rest was useless.

In spite of the wording of clause 1 of the Bill itself, and the explicit statement of Mr. Birrell during the first reading speech, that neither Catholic nor Church school would receive a single penny of either rates or

taxes, and the moment they did so they became, *ipso facto*, Council schools in every sense of the term; we assumed that the clause 4 school would go on as a Catholic school under the Bill, just as it was when the Bill was introduced. A greater mistake was never made. Neither the resolutions of the Hierarchy nor those of the Catholic Education Council as reported in the Catholic Press, May 4th, 1906, showed any real recognition of what was actually done. The danger to the schools was recognised, of course, but it was not specifically stated as a reason for opposition that no Catholic school was possible under the Bill, as will be seen from their wording.

(1) "It was opposed because the Bill gives to local authorities the right of control of religious teaching in public elementary schools, and the power of placing children under the continuous educational influence of those who may be indifferent or even hostile to the conscientious convictions of the parents of those children."

The Bill not only gave the Council power to do this, but imposed upon them the obligation of running the schools as Cowper-Temple schools, and forbade any inquiry into the religious belief of the teacher.

(2) "Because while generous provision is made for the children of those who are able conscientiously to accept for their children what is styled simple Bible teaching, the provision made for the children of those who regard such teaching as not only inadequate, but unacceptable, insufficient," etc.

There was really no provision made for such as could not accept Bible reading, the Bill only per-

mitted the Councils to give facilities if convenient, so that the parents themselves might provide the teaching at their own cost.

(3) "Because the clauses relating to endowments are such as to render it possible to confiscate and divert to uses for which they were never intended buildings and funds," etc.

It was not only possible, but the only way in which the Act could be worked at all was by confiscating, at least for a time, under clauses 8, 10, and 11, any school that the authority considered suitable for use under clause 1, and, once taken, they would be lost to us under clause 8.

At a meeting held at Preston on May 19th, 1906, Father Wright certainly denied that the Government had a mandate to abolish denominational schools, but the resolution did not take so definite a line. It "protested against the establishment of one form of religious belief practically to the exclusion of every other," and continued, "We further condemn the Bill as unjust and illusory, because it opens the way, by the most despotic means, at least to the wholesale diversion from their original purpose of Catholic schools, and by refusing to guarantee Catholic teachers to our schools it renders futile any seeming facilities for Catholic instruction."

This is a very mild description of what the Bill actually did in the way of such diversion.

The sub-committee of the Liverpool school managers in their report (Catholic Press, August 17th, 1906) say: "The day it becomes law it will rob us of more than 50 per cent. of our Catholic schools, and

there is no guarantee that the remaining 50 per cent. will continue to be Catholic. They may or may not be taken over by the local authority, facilities may or may not be granted, the teachers may or may not be Catholic, and there is no provision for the future erection of Catholic schools except under almost impossible conditions."

This statement is inaccurate, because not 50 per cent., but 100 per cent., of Catholic schools were taken away. Every single school ceased to be a Catholic school, and there was no provision for the erection of future schools, which were not even contemplated by the Bill. In fact, except for the private liberality of some wealthy Catholic in a country district it would not only be "almost impossible," but "absolutely impossible" to build a single Catholic school, and they could only be recognised as certified efficient schools receiving neither rate nor grant, but compelled to compete with those that did receive grants. In August the Bill was in the Lords, and Mr. Redmond made a speech at St. Ignatius' College, Stamford Hill, on Friday, July 27th, in the course of which he said: "One of two things would inevitably occur, either this Bill would never become law at all, or it would be so amended (in the Lords) before it passess in such a way as to make it at least tolerable for Catholic Schools.'"

The same paper gives his speech on the third reading before the Bill was sent to the Lords, and he said "his party would vote solid against the Bill, and in carefully measured words he declared that they looked to the House of Lords to amend it so as

to make it workable and fair to Catholics. The Bill would go to the House of Lords with the sanction of a large majority, but deprived of that moral weight and authority it could only obtain if it had already secured the approval, or at least the acquiescence of, the religious minorities in the country. As the Bill stood, it absolutely condemned half the Catholic schools to starvation, or to accepting a system of teaching against which their consciences revolted. It was nothing but religious tyranny to offer them such alternatives."

"The other half of the Catholic schools were to be subjected to the whim of the local education authority. He had hoped that he and his party would be able to stand by the Liberal party against the Upper House in case it went against the principles of the Bill, but it was now clear that the one hope of safeguarding Catholic interests lay in the amendments to be introduced in the House of Lords."

So that we find the Irish party accepted the principles of the Bill, but looked to the House of Lords to amend the details and to make it acceptable to Catholics, a task which was utterly impossible. These quotations are sufficient to show the universal misunderstanding of the real scope and effect of the Bill, which would, indeed, have been a much more drastic settlement "than would appear from a mere scrutiny of its clauses."

We know what happened in the House of Lords, and how the Irish party in their hatred of that House, and on the strength of the verbal and worthless promises of the Government, voted in the Commons

solidly for the Bill, which went to its grave "unwept, unhonoured, and unsung," and deservedly passed into the limbo of good intentions. Mr. Birrell admitted in Manchester a few months ago that had the Government gone to the country upon the Bill they would have been defeated. We opposed the Bill as a whole, but we didn't begin our opposition in the right place. We accepted clause 1 as a matter of course, and in none of the second reading speeches of the Nationalist members was there any demand for equal financial treatment, or any protest against Catholics being deprived of rates and grants for their schools, and all their schools confiscated by the Councils. We took the first and worst clause without seeing it, because we had our eyes fixed on the mirage of clause 4.

We will now see how the Bill was fought and what were the opinion of Catholic members in the House. On Monday, June 24th, Mr. Dillon, speaking on clause 4, said that "Clause 3 did not cover the case of the Catholic schools, and if the Catholics were to obtain any relief from the provisions of the first clause it must be by clause 4. He was of opinion, after careful enquiry, that one-half of the Catholic schools would be unable to secure the benefits of the clause. . . . They were told to trust local bodies, but in view of the declaration of war against clause 4 which had been uttered by leading Nonconformists, Catholics could not feel themselves safe in the hands of the local authorities. . . . He would be prepared to accept the appeal to the Board of Education, but he could not accept the rider, for it deliberately

offered to local bodies a substantial money bribe to throw the denominational schools out of the national system. . . . If they were not prepared to pay rates in order that Catholic teaching might be given, then let them authorise the Government to give to the poor Catholic schools not only the Exchequer grant, but a sum equal to the rates which Catholics paid towards the cost of Cowper-Temple teaching in the public elementary schools."

This speech shows our utter failure to comprehend the Bill. There would be no Catholic schools under clause 1, there was to be no Exchequer grant to any but a Council school, and Catholic schools were not only thrown out of the national system, but starved out of existence. Speaking at Middlesbrough in July, he said that "There was hardly a single member of the Government who had not declared that in their judgment Catholic schools should not be carried on just as they were before. The Bill, as it stood, was entirely unsatisfactory, and did not carry out those declarations."

He then went on to mention five amendments, "few and slight," he called them, "which would make the Bill a thoroughly good Bill, which he could honestly recommend the Bishops and laity to accept."

These amendments went to the very root of the Government proposals, and only one, that rent might be paid for clause 4 schools, would help us in the least, and that rent would have to equal one-fifth the cost of maintenance. Mr. Belloc, writing to the *Catholic Herald* (date, July 16th), pointed out what, in the opinion of those who had studied the Bill most

closely, should be amended if its provisions are to be acceptable to us. "If the Government have miscalculated, and if there is a passionate demand amongst the English working classes for the various schools of Anglican opinion (of which, by the way, they had given the same proofs as Catholics, by maintaining these schools) they would discover their error at the polls." Quite so, but in the meantime the voluntary schools would have been destroyed and the system revolutionised. "As the Bill now stands certain schools can have a definite form of religious teaching given within their walls every day. In other words, such schools, such Catholic schools, can go on exactly as they are now; and if for the word 'certain' we could write 'Catholic,' our claim would have been not only fully but generously met." Here, again, we find the same terrible mistake. Under clause 1 the schools he described would receive not one single penny of rates or taxes except for the Council school teaching, and the whole cost of the time spent in Catholic teaching in those Council schools would have to be paid by the Catholic body, in addition to paying the rate for the others.

It is only necessary to see what we have at present, and to compare what we must claim with what the Bill gave to us, plus all the promises made on behalf of the government to save the Bill in the Lords.

WHAT WE ASKED FOR.

Catholic Schools for Catholic children, with Catholic teachers (and teaching) ;

under Catholic management and control ;

equal financial treatment. As regards maintenance.

WHAT THE BILL GAVE.

Council schools open to all children, open to all teachers except as *promised* in clause 4 (Lords') with Protestant Bible teaching, except as provided in Clause 4.

under the control and management of the local education authority.

Catholics to pay the whole cost of their special teaching under clauses 3 and 4, in addition to paying the rate for the Cowper-Temple schools.

But assuming that under clause 4 we got all that Nationalists imagined, there was another thing to be considered. There was no guarantee in the Bill (1) that the arrangement would come into operation at all; (2) that if it did come into operation it was not secured to us for more than a few months. Supposing, for the sake of argument, that the Bill did give us all that is alleged by the friends of the Liberal party, and (a much more improbable supposition) that the parents (at, say, St. Patrick's School, in Manchester) were able and willing to pay over to the Education Committee the sum of £700 or £800 a year, which we had agreed to pay for the privileges under clause 4.

The Act came into operation on January 1st, 1908, but in the ordinary course of things the school would re-open on the 6th. During the holidays the Education Committee could arrange to use the boys' school as an infant school for all the children in the district, Catholic and Protestant; in the girls' school might be grouped some of the junior standards, and so on with the Protestant schools in the immediate neighbour-

hood, so that the proportion at St. Patrick's would be less than 4-5ths. The Council, having the full control and management of the school, could do this, and the Board of Education would consent on "educational" grounds, so the arrangement would be quashed, the homogeneity of the largest Catholic school in Manchester would be broken up, and the Catholic children dispersed amongst a Protestant majority to be taught the Protestant Bible by teachers who might be Turks, Jews, or Atheists, but who must not be "Catholic teachers selected to teach Catholic children in Catholic schools, under Catholic management and control."

Where would be the security for Catholic schools? The same thing might be done by any local education authority in any part of the country, and as they would have full management and control of all schools, no one could say them nay. This has been attempted in the West Riding of Yorkshire even under the Act of 1902, but the attempt was frustrated. It would certainly be attempted under such arrangement as clause 4, even if such a clause were not in itself impracticable, and foredoomed to failure (as the Government of 1906 were quite well aware), and we should have no remedy.

Finally, under clause 8 (2), (b) the Board of Education could at any time, by virtue of their supreme jurisdiction, close any clause 4 school and order the schools to be carried on as public elementary schools, with Cowper-Temple teaching ten times a week, and Catholic teaching absolutely thrust out of the schools we have made so many sacrifices to build and maintain.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AFTER 1906.

It is perhaps not generally known that in addition to the Bill usually associated with Mr. Birrell he brought in another, entitled "Education (Consolidation) Bill," which bore a memorandum that it was "intended to represent without amendment the existing Statute Law with respect to education in England and Wales." His object in introducing this Bill is not quite clear, probably it was intended as alternative in the event of the rejection of the first Bill. It consisted of 115 clauses and five schedules, taking up altogether 68 pages of Parliamentary paper.

The passing of the "Education" Bill would have made its provisions inoperative. It chopped up the Education Acts, and by certain structural alterations gave more power to the local Education Authorities and the Board of Education than existing Acts. By the Schedule V., which apparently contained the sting of the measure, no less than 15 Acts of Parliament were repealed, and parts of five others, including the Acts of 1870 and 1902, replacing them by his new measure. It was introduced on the 10th of May, 1906, just a month after the "Education" Bill, but no more was heard of it, and it only remains as a Parliament curiosity.

After Mr. Birrell with the "olive branch" of

extermination came Mr. McKenna with the "sword" of contracting out and starvation. He introduced a short Bill of only six clauses, and three schedules, which, however, was almost as bad as his predecessors.

Mr. Birrell's Bill recognised only one class of school receiving either rates or grant, and it permitted a Catholic or Church school only where the whole cost was paid privately.

Mr. McKenna's differed from this in recognising three classes: (1) Council schools built and supported by rates and taxes called "public elementary schools"; (2) "elementary schools," receiving a fixed Exchequer grant not exceeding 47s. per child; and (3) the private or certified efficient school of Mr. Birrell's Bill.

Of these only the Council schools would get the benefit of the administrative machinery, such as school attendance officers, etc.

Attendances would not be compulsory at the elementary or voluntary schools, though they would have to compete with the "public" schools, and if not equally efficient the Parliamentary grant would be cut down or refused altogether.

These schools also were only permitted where there were alternative schools for the Nonconformist children, and when the average attendance was not less than 30, "as computed by the Board of Education." These conditions would have put an end to more than half the voluntary schools, and the remainder were so much at the mercy of the Board of Education that they could not continue for a day

longer than the Minister of Education thought fit to permit.

Clause 2 imposed upon the local authority the obligation of providing accommodation in the Council schools "without payment of fees for all children resident in their area whose parents desire that accommodation for them, and also for any other children resident in that area who are from any cause not receiving efficient elementary education." So that the Board of Education had only to decide that the education in voluntary schools was not efficient and away went the whole system; they might also be closed as "unnecessary." Clause 3 provided for the confiscation of the school buildings much on the same lines as Mr. Birrell's, sub-section 4 giving them the power to sell or dispose of them "as they think appropriate under the circumstances." Sub-section 5 gave the Board of Education the same supreme power to make any order, and impose any conditions or provisions that may be expedient or necessary to give effect to the order.

Mr. McKenna's Bill, therefore, was not as bad as the "olive branch." It put us much in the same position as before 1902, except that attendance at our schools would not be compulsory, and we should have to provide our own machinery for looking after absentees, and at any time it might be decided by the Board of Education that attendance at the voluntary schools did not comply with the compulsory provisions, and in any case the schools could not have lasted very long under such a one-sided arrangement. Still, it left us Catholic schools, though it

took away our right to rate aid. The Bill was eventually withdrawn by the Government.

To pacify the Passive Resister later on, a Bill was introduced to deduct one-fifteenth of the salary of teachers in voluntary schools, except Nonconformist British schools in which religious teaching *would be paid for by the State*, that being the proportion calculated to cover the cost of the religious teaching. This also was withdrawn.

Many Churchmen were now becoming very anxious about the fate of their schools. Some of their own body were quite willing to let them go, and conferences were called in many parts of the country to discuss the possibility of a settlement. One such conference was held in Manchester in 1908. It was called by Dr. Knox, the Bishop, and included about 20 Nonconformists, three Catholics, two Jews, and Churchmen sufficient to make the number up to about 40. We met first on the Tuesday in Easter week at the Rylands Library, and spent four hours discussing the matter on the first day without making much progress. The real difficulty was the attitude of the Nonconformist members. There was no attempt to discuss *principles*. It must be assumed that their position was unassailable, and that they had a perfect and undoubted right to have their Bible reading taught at the public expense, whilst we had no right to have our teaching given on any terms at all. It was not a conference to settle the question by mutual concession, but to see how much the Anglicans and Catholics were prepared to give up. The *sine qua non* at that conference, as upon all other

occasions, is that the Nonconformists were sole judges, and decided what concession they will make if we consent to give up our schools. This is an impossible basis.

The conference was certainly representative, and I think got quite as near an agreement as is possible, where the true principle of settlement is excluded from the discussion. It was found that there was no possibility of agreement as to the Urban schools, and the discussion was afterwards confined to the schools in the single school areas, and here, as usual, the areas containing only Council schools were left out of account. The Nonconformist having the monopoly in those areas were perfectly satisfied, and the question was big enough without them.

The result of four days' discussion was a series of resolutions that satisfied nobody, and which were, to some extent, contradictory. The Church of England certainly gave up a great deal; but the Nonconformists could not agree amongst themselves as to what the Church had really conceded.

But no concession was made to denominationalists in Council school areas.

At one part they were asked were they willing that all forms of religious teaching should be put on the same footing, and each paid for by the parents desiring it; the answer was yes, and on that condition I voted for the resolution. That was not embodied in the resolution drawn up by one of the Nonconformist members, and submitted for signature.

The majority of the conference signed with more or less reservation, and a minority report, signed by

two or three irreconcilables, was also issued. I may say that this minority, through their spokesman, threatened Catholics with the same treatment they had received in France if we did not give up our schools into their hands.

During the lunch interval on the last day we met I had conversations with several of the Nonconformists, and it is impossible to understand how educated men, and men who, in ordinary business dealings, are upright and honourable, should take such a grossly biased and unjust view of their rights and duties in the matter. I suppose it must be the inherent bigotry and intolerance of the Puritan tradition.

The principal spokesman, a member of a Nonconformist body which up to 1902 had made the greatest efforts to support and extend their denominational schools, in reply to a question, said that "it was against their principles to build their own schools." This same gentleman, polished, urbane, and mild, in a later correspondence following a meeting on the accession oath, refused to accept my account of an incident simply because "it implied that an English Protestant could be guilty of lying." Was ever such a reason given for not accepting any statement? It helps, however, to understand their assumption of infallible righteousness in matters educational.

The result of these conferences was a Bill introduced by Mr. Runciman towards the end of 1908, but which was finally withdrawn by the Government on December 10th, 1908. It was hoped that this Bill would pass through the House of Commons as an

agreed Bill, but it failed, not upon a question of principle, but because of a difference as to the amount of the grant to be paid to the voluntary schools.

Like all the other Bills, it was fundamentally unjust, and, therefore, fundamentally bad, but it was the best Bill of those introduced by the Liberals. The Nationalists would not look at it, and it was very objectionable to Nonconformists, but there is every reason to believe that had it passed the House of Commons it would have been passed by the House of Lords on account of the number of Churchmen who supported it. Fortunately, the dissension between the Archbishop of Canterbury and Mr. Runciman was so serious that this fourth attempt failed like the rest. I have not the Bill at hand to give the main outlines, but it was the best Bill of the four, because whilst Mr. Birrell took away rates and grants, and compelled us to pay for the special religious teaching, Mr. Runciman only took away rate aid, but left us the ordinary Government grant, and gave us an additional grant in lieu of rates.

In spite of this the Bill was bad. (1) Because it was unjust; (2) because it put our schools outside the national system, and deprived both children and teachers of those advantages accruing from the rates and taxes which we paid along with others, and which we had exactly the same right to share.

What the other Ministers had attempted to obtain by legislation openly Mr. Runciman tried to attain by trickery, but the result would have been the same in all cases.

This Bill had advantages over Mr. McKenna's as

to the amount of the grant, and the arrangements that would be made for pooling the grant in certain districts, so that a Catholic Committee would be able to vary the payments, and the richer schools would help the poorer. But the Bill, like every other proposal on education that has come from the Liberal party, was essentially bad.

The chief feature of the debates was the attitude taken up by Mr. Dillon, on behalf of the Irish party, in asking for a settlement on the lines of clause 1 in Mr. Birrell's Bill, which, he said, would be accepted by the Catholics of England as a satisfactory settlement.

A Settlement Committee, which was formed for the purpose of bringing about an understanding between Churchmen and Nonconformists, continued to meet at intervals in the hope of arranging a *surrender of the Church schools at least in the so-called single school areas*. Here again, as in all other discussions on this aspect of the question, only the Nonconformists were to be considered, and the rights of Catholics and Churchmen were altogether ignored. This committee issued a plan of settlement some time ago, and it is upon their lines that the latest Single School Areas Bill was formed. Since the failure of the Runciman Bill the Government have fallen back on the persecution of the secondary schools, and the introduction of private members' Bills, in the hope of smuggling through the House as privately as possible the most fundamental changes in the Education Acts, and so destroying our schools, just as surely as by any of the big Bills had they succeeded.

Catholics are most concerned about their own schools, and the action of the Irish party which is pledged to defend our educational rights.

Let us sum up the position as it is to-day.

In March, 1904, Mr. Redmond, speaking in Manchester, said to the Catholics of Great Britain: "Put aside all fears for your schools, give your votes to Liberals upon Home Rule, and 'the moment any Government touches the interests of the Catholic schools *out they will go.*'" That is the pledge, repeated in various forms up to 1909. We kept our part of the bargain, and, as the *Catholic Herald* said in 1906, the vote went nearly solid for Liberals. The same thing happened twice in 1910. What of their part of the contract?

In 1906 they voted away to the Councils every Catholic school in England and Wales under clause 1. By accepting clause 3 they agreed that Catholics should pay rates without receiving any benefit therefrom. They voted for the Bill as against the House of Lords, though this provision was unaltered, and after Mr. Redmond's appeal to that House to do justice to Catholic schools.

They opposed the Bills of Mr. McKenna and Mr. Runciman which were obviously open persecution, but on the withdrawal of the latter in December, 1908, Mr. Dillon, on behalf of the party, asked the Government for the exterminating "settlement" of Mr. Birrell, which, he said, "would be accepted by Catholics."

In February, 1909, during the debate on the Secondary School Regulations, Mr. Dillon defended

and justified the action of the Government, on the ground that we had not accepted their settlement of 1906. They went into the new Parliament in 1910 to get Home Rule "*at any cost.*"

Following the election of January, 1910, these regulations were discussed on the Education Estimates. No Irish member either spoke or voted, although the *mere threat of opposition* would have compelled their withdrawal. The Government had a very small majority, but had the Irish members voted whose names appeared on the notice paper of the day the division would have gone against the Government and the regulations would have been repealed.

In 1911 Mr. Boland spoke against the regulations, but I think that on that occasion no vote was taken. But in July, writing to a correspondent, Mr. Boland denied that Mr. Redmond's pledge was ever given, and claimed that if made at all it was fully carried out by their not voting for the Government in 1910. He added that they were sent to the House of Commons to get Home Rule and not to defeat a Government pledged to pass a measure of Home Rule even for the sake of Catholic schools, hinting pretty clearly that in 1912 they would vote *for* the Government and *against* the schools.

On March 7th, 1912, the regulations again came up for discussion, and the *official* Nationalists gave a silent but solid vote for the Government and against the schools, again breaking the pledge by which they got their present position in the House of Commons.

On the next day, March 8th, they voted for the

second reading of Sir G. C. Mark's Bill on single school areas and the confiscation of nearly 300 Catholic schools. This was in Committee reduced to 27.

During the debate Mr. Dillon gave numerous quotations to prove that the Irish party *had always been willing to sacrifice a certain number of Catholic schools "to remove the grievance of the Nonconformists,"* a "grievance" which, as we have seen, is non-existent.

Later on in the debate Mr. Hay Morgan, the Nonconformist Whip, claimed that the Irish party would vote for any Education Bill for the purpose of keeping in the Government until they got Home Rule. They allowed this claim to be made before the House of Commons without a word of protest, and that is the last public action on the question of Catholic education.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE SOLUTION.

We now come to the most important of the many important aspects of the education question, the solution. We hear much from politicians of the "education difficulty" and the "education problem," but there is neither difficulty nor problem beyond what they have themselves created. The education question is simplicity itself, and there was no difficulty until the politician interfered. He created all the difficulty, and only through his action is there any problem at all. Given the desire to settle the education question *as an education question*, and apart from all other considerations, the solution is easy. It has been demonstrated that all the heart-burning and bitterness has been caused by the attempts of the politicians to capture educational funds for the sole benefit of one political party, and one group of religious denominations, and to make subscription to the creed of this group the condition for any child obtaining the most elementary education.

It may seem rather severe and sweeping, but it is none the less true to say that during the forty years we have been discussing, there have been only two attempts to settle the question, and that both attempts were frustrated by the politicians upon other grounds than education. In 1870 Mr. Forster made a grand attempt to establish a national system, fair to all, and under which every child should have

the best education obtainable, and free from disqualification or restriction of any kind.

We know how this ended. The Parliament that had disestablished the Irish Church at the bidding of Nonconformists, at the bidding of those same Nonconformists set up a new and exclusive endowment of Nonconformity in the Board schools. It does not matter what name may be given to the process, that was what was actually done. From 1876 to 1902 many attempts were made to tinker with the question, and to palliate or remedy the injustices of the Act of 1870. But only in 1902 was an attempt made to go to the root of the matter, and to do what was originally proposed in 1870—give all children and all parents a share in the rate they had been paying for so many years.

We heard a great deal even from our own friends about the unwisdom of accepting rate-aid, and it was argued that it meant necessarily complete popular control, and the elimination of denominational teaching and its safeguards. Ten years' experience has proved that it does not necessarily mean anything of the kind, but, that given goodwill and a desire for freedom and religious equality all round, the system works satisfactorily, and has been accepted by the people at large.

The system of 1870 was never accepted by the country as was the system of 1902. The people who accepted the former were those only who got the sole benefit of the money levied upon the community. Even then their political leaders, who were aiming at something very different, made the education

question the pretext for still further persecuting their political and religious opponents, and tried to get a monopoly of the taxes spent on education, just as they had the monopoly of the rates. Their aim was never education. It was an attempt at dominating the public life of the country, and they found their best means of attaining this was to obtain control of the education of the children, and so train them that they would in after life be intolerant of any other authority than their own. We see the result in the social, political, and religious conditions to-day. Fully half the people of the country rebelled against these attempts, and for thirty years kept up an agitation for equal rights for their children and themselves, at the same time building and maintaining schools so as to secure these as far as possible. In 1902 an Act was passed, giving to all parties and all creeds, without exception, and upon exactly the same conditions, a share in the rates without interfering with the Nonconformist monopoly of the Board schools, or imposing upon them either grievance, injustice, or disability of any kind. This instalment of justice gave a fresh impetus to the politician, who saw his chief weapon against his opponent taken out of his hands.

The Board school system was being used to cripple the Catholic Church, and to destroy the Anglican Church, and, like the wicked spirit in the parable, seven other spirits, even more wicked, were brought up to renew the attack on definite Christian teaching in the schools.

Unfortunately, Catholics are very largely to blame

for the present position. Relatively we were the greatest sufferers under the unjust Act of 1870. Relatively, also, we were the greatest beneficiaries under the Act of 1902. Owing to the poverty of our people we received far more benefit from that Act than any other denomination. What has been our return? Because the party that gave us the Act was of a different political colour from the majority of Catholics, we accepted it gladly, but grudged to the authors the credit they deserved for introducing and passing one of the finest pieces of legislation ever passed by the House of Commons. We put on our party spectacles and tried to pick holes in the Act. We never honestly and candidly explained to our people all that we obtained by it. The result is that our own people, who have received such benefit from the Act, though it gave them only a part of their rights, and left untouched the privileges of Non-conformists, are under the impression that it gave us the privileges and imposed injustices upon Nonconformists. This has been erroneously maintained by the Irish party. The conduct of Catholics has been ungrateful and fatuous in the extreme.

Owing to this ignorance of the Act, and the prejudices aroused by some of our prominent politicians, a large number of Catholics are favourable to a reversal of the Act and the imposition of a grievance and injustice upon Catholics and Anglicans alike, far exceeding what we suffered for thirty years under the Act of 1870.

The policy of the last six years involves the sweeping away of Catholic schools, and all because

of that ignorance of the present educational position due to our apathy and ingratitude, and dependence on the statements of Nonconformists. We are threatened with an educational settlement this year on the lines of the Free Church Council's resolutions of 1906. In any settlement of the question Catholics must take a share, and if it is to be settled, Catholics must take more than their share of the work of educating the country in the principles necessary to any settlement. It can be settled only upon lines of absolute justice and religious equality, and only the Catholic Church can lay down the true principles of both, and that just because she is the Catholic Church.

Three solutions have been discussed: (1) the denominational solution such as we have to some extent under the Act of 1902; (2) the so-called undenominational, but really inter-denominational Nonconformist solution; (3) the secular solution, which no two persons interpret in the same way. By common consent of all parties the purely secular solution is out of court, but it is held up as a bogey by Nonconformists to frighten timid Churchmen into accepting their solution with all that it implies in our political, religious, and social life. To Catholics the secular solution is preferable to any "undenominational" solution. The choice lies between the frankly denominational and the inter-denominational Nonconformist solutions. Very singularly all the attention is paid to the latter, and to the discredited and admittedly impossible "secular" solution. I do not remember seeing any reference to

what is obviously the fairest plan, the Bill of 1870, and for that denominationalists have only themselves to blame for not trying to understand and popularise it. There is no reason at all why that solution should not take up a much more important position during the next few months. It rests with the Catholics of England whether it does actually take such a position.

As a direct result of the principle established in 1870 we have had forty years of discord and dissatisfaction, because that principle was fundamentally unjust and unfair to the majority. If the principle had been attacked, as it ought to have been, in the very beginning, we should not have had to wait until 1902 for the remedy. It may be objected that there has been more discord since the passing of the Act of 1902. Is that statement true, or is it not true that the country generally has accepted the Act, and all the noise and outcry comes from a small minority that sees its monopoly and some of its privileges taken away?

It is impossible to estimate the harm done to the children and the country through the never-ending dispute caused by the Act of 1870, and it reflects little credit on the judgment of any persons or parties who propose to settle that dispute by making the position infinitely more unjust and unfair.

Only by going back to the principles of Mr. Forster's original Bill, which were partly put into operation by Mr. Balfour in 1902, can we hope for educational peace and the educational progress of the nation. The Nonconformist settlement of

universal Council schools may serve to put greater power into the hands of one political party and of the Nonconformist Churches, but it can never make for the educational well-being of the nation. It will be the beginning of a still fiercer struggle. The conscientious parent will always ask what shall it profit my child "if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his soul," or what shall "I give in exchange for his soul?" Parliament can never impose conditions upon the conscience that will not be resisted.

The secular solution is impossible, the country does not want it, and will not have it.

The Nonconformist solution is impossible, because it is fundamentally unjust, and the people as a whole do not want it. There remains, therefore, the frankly denominational solution of Mr. Forster.

What would be said of the physician who persisted in a course of treatment that only irritated the patient and brought neither relief nor cure? Change your doctor. What can be said in favour of a system which has produced only forty years of strife and hindered education all along the line? Change the system. Forty years ago England took the wrong educational turning. The Radicals imposed upon the country an "undenominational" system that they dared not impose upon Presbyterian Scotland. They gave Scotland a denominational system. Why not try the same treatment for England? The Act of 1870 was an educational failure. The people did not want it. The voluntary system grew nearly twice as fast so long as it had any administrative chance at all.

At the end of 30 years the greater number of the School Boards had been formed either by compulsion or trickery. Educationally the Act had failed, more than half the children in the country were shut out from participating in its benefits by an iniquitous religious test. It offered all the educational advantages that money could buy; bribes, in the way of prizes, were held out to the children, yet in spite of all the inducements the people would not have it. Politically, it was a gigantic piece of jobbery and hypocrisy. Liberationists protested against all compulsory exactions for religious purposes. The Baptist declared his object to be the freedom of all men everywhere from disadvantage, restraint, or taxation in matters purely religious. Yet these are the strongest supporters of the unjust system of taxing the whole community for their exclusive benefit, and for the teaching of their own doctrines in the schools. These are the people who say that the poor Catholic must pay but not share the rate. These are the men who say that their principles must be taught in the schools, but that the principles of the Catholics and Anglicans must not be taught.

Let Catholics wake up whilst we have yet time and make a bold and determined stand for the faith of their children. Let them educate the country before we are in the thick of the fight. Churchmen are too timid and disunited to make a good fight, and the choice for them is between two kinds of Protestantism. For Catholics the issue is more vital.

Let us insist that any proposals for settlement shall square with the Ten Commandments. Let us insist

that they shall square with the elementary principles of justice. Let us insist that they shall square with Liberal professions. Let us insist that they shall square with that definition of religious equality which Sir W. Harcourt declared to be the very corner stone of Liberalism, and which is given in the first chapter. When we ask for educational justice we are called "reactionaries." By the same kind of reasoning the penitent thief on the cross, and the sinner over whose conversion the angels rejoice were reactionaries.

These words are used without any sense of their meaning. It is not reactionary to abandon a bad cause for a good one, to leave the path of injustice and oppression for the path of justice and freedom.

The Nonconformists are the reactionaries. They go back to the days of the penal laws, and impose the cruellest kind of disability upon our children on account of their faith. A demand for a share of the rates is met with the cry of "Concurrent Endowment," as though concurrent endowment were not the rule instead of being the exception in the spending of the rates. Their latest cry is the "Civic Solution." Let us meet them on their own ground, and insist on our rights as citizens. We ask that all citizens shall participate in the benefits of the rate, just as all participate in the payment. We demand the abolition of conditions that will prevent any citizen from using the public schools paid for out of the rates, or the catering for all parties, and not one only. We are content with receiving the working expenses for our schools, having our teachers and

children put upon the same footing as all others without disqualification or disability upon religious grounds. As citizens we pay the rates, as citizens we demand to share.

We object to the authorities providing for the Nonconformist citizen what he refuses to provide for the Catholic and the Anglican citizen. We object to the Nonconformist child being given all the educational advantages and ours being altogether deprived of them. We must challenge the very principle of the Act of 1870, and show the country that the system is founded upon injustice and hypocrisy.

We must show that the Act of 1902 is based upon principles of justice and equality, and whilst claiming to the full all our rights as citizens and rate-payers, make it quite clear that the only compromise we are prepared to make is the provision of our school buildings so that they may be Catholic schools in every sense of the term.

The solution, and the only one that will ever settle the question, is the Act of 1902, with all-round facilities for minorities where only one school is possible. Not secular education with facilities for the parents to give religious teaching, but the school to be carried on as a voluntary or Council school according to circumstances, with the fullest possible rights and facilities for the religious teaching of the minority. All religious teaching to be paid for equally by the Local Education Authority.

That is the only plan that will secure not only educational peace. but such educational progress that

England may take her proper place in the educational world, and be second to none in the future.

Why should there be hesitation or shyness in demanding equal treatment for Catholic teaching in all cases with the Nonconformists. We boast of our faith. We boast that our religion has come down from Jesus Christ. Let us claim to be put on the same footing before the law as any of the sects, whose name betrays its human origin. Remember we are fighting for the souls of our children as well as for their right to go out into the world with an equipment equal to any other.

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